IACOBS Wreſtling with God:

Or,

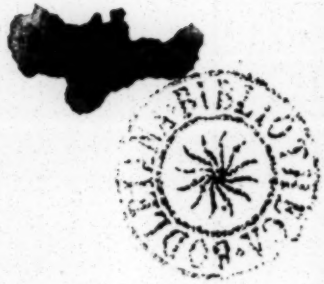
The Triumph of a Chriſtian.

Verie comfortable for all them, who are grieued in Conſcience.

By M. William Couper Miniſter

Commit thy way vnto God, and hee ſhall bring it to paſſe.

At London
Printed by *V.S.* for *William Ferbrand*, and are to be ſolde at his ſhop in Popes head alley. 1607.



¶ *To the very godly, and* right Noble Ladie, my Ladie *Mary Stewart Countesse* of Marre.

Right noble Lad[illegible]: The Church of God is compard by Salomon *to a terrible army, wherein are* bands of strong men, and valiant, Israe. lites expert in the warre, and that can handle the Sword. *And euery Booke of sacred Scripture wee may call, a seuerall Armor-house, furnished*

better than that houſe of Lebanon, *which* Salomon *ſtored with Shields and Targets of Gold. In it are wepons of War, both inuaſiue, and defenſiue, armor cõuenient for euery ſtate of life, and meete for euerie kinde of battell, wherewith our aduerſaries are able to aſſault vs. But as* Dauids *Woorthies were not all of one valor, for* Abiſhai *chiefe of the ſecond three, yet did not attaine vnto the firſt three: So haue not all the warriours of Chriſt, alike ſtrength, and skill to fight the Lordes battells: And therefore we who are but nouices in the ſpirituall warfare, as wee ſhould bee carefull euery day to put on the compleate armour of God, that we may ſtand, ſo ſhould wee diligently take heede to other valiaunt Wreſtlers, who* Through faith and patience haue inherited the promiſes

miſes before vs, *that we may learne of them, how to weild our weapons in the ſpirituall warfare. Among many, whoſe battells are regiſtred in the booke of God for our inſtruc̄tiō, I haue here brought in worthy* Iacob, *a wreſtler, from the womb, euen to the day of his death, who in this his ſingular, & moſt rare wreſtling with God, lets vs ſee an Image of Gods wreſtlings with his childrē, the varietie of tentations, whereby he proues vs: and the means by which we ſtand. Sundrie others before mee haue written learnedlie, and largelie of this ſubiect, but I haue laboured as farre as I could, to ſchew coincident doctrine, and haue principally indeuoured my ſelfe, to ſearch out ſuch obſeruations, as through experience, by the grace of God, I haue found moſt comfortable for ſuch as*

are exercised in conscience. And these (right noble Ladie) I haue been bolde to dedicate vnto your Honour, as vnto one, who hauing obtained mercie of God, is through his grace dailie exercised in the spirituall warfare. Accept it therefore as a testimonie of that loue and reuerence that I beare to that grace of God, which is manifest in you: for the encrease whereof I dailie pray vnto God, that he would confirme you to the end, & bring forward his owne worke in you to perfection.

Your Ladiships in our common Sauiour, the Lord Iesus

William Cowper,
Minister at Perth.

¶ The Conuoy of a kindely Friend.

I

LOrd intimate thy loue vnto mine heart,
Perſwade my ſoule, that I am alway thine,
Giue me a bleſſing, Lord, ere thou depart:
No more in earth, I craue for to be mine:
Then, to thy loue O Lord my heart incline.
Let me in mercie ſee a blinke of thee;
Do what thou wilt vnto thy ſeruant, ſine
I craue no more, but in thine armes to die.
Thy wreſtling wretch, ſet Lord at libertie,
And ſaue me from the ſlau'ry of my ſinne,
My Loue, my Life, make *Abrams* childe of me,
That to my wiſhed Canaan I may winne.
This pithie Preacher takes me by the hand,
And lends me light to leade me to that land.

II.

OVt of the Flint with force commixt with skill,
Euen as the Forger makes the fire to flee,
Which few beleeu'd into ſuch boundes to be:
Right ſo, this Paſtor doth his part fulfill,
Out of the Word, for to reueale the will
Of God, who makes an happy harmonie
Betweene his tongue, his heart, his hand, all three.
Thou needes not bluſh then to ſubſcriue thy Bill,
But let thy learned Commentares come forth,
Such light, and life, thou ſhalt leaue in the land,
Thine honeſt heart expreſſed by thine hand,
That word, and writ, ſhall witneſſe well thy worth.
Let pleaſant *Perth*, where thou them both imployes,
Aboue the reſt moſt rightly then rejoyce.

M. William Buchanan.

Geneſis chap. 32. verſe 24.

24. *Now when* Iacob *was left himſelfe alone, there wreſtled a man with him vnto the breaking of the day*

25. *And he ſawe that he could not preuaile againſt him, therefore he touched the hollowe of his thigh, and the hollowe of* Iacobs *thigh was looſed, as he wreſtled with him*

26. *And he ſaid, let me goe. For the morning appeareth, who anſwered, I will not let thee goe, except thou bleſſe me.*

27. *Then ſaid he, What is thy name, and he ſaid,* Iacob.

28. *Then ſaid he, thy name ſhall be called*

led Iacob *no more, but* Iſrael, *becauſe thou haſt had power with God, thou ſhalt alſo preuaile with men.*

29. *Then* Iacob *demanded, tell me thy name, I pray thee, and he anſwered, wherefore now doſt thou aske my name? and he bleſſed him there.*

30. *And* Iacob *called the name of that place* Peniel, *for ſaid he, I haue ſeene God face to face, and my life is preſerued.*

31. *And the Sunne roſe to him, as he paſſed* Peniel, *and he halted vpon his thigh.*

My help is in the name of the Lord.

A priuilege of the godly, that ſay God is with them, none can be againſt them, to hurt them. Rom. 8. 31.

IT is a comfortable ſaying for the godly which is ſet downe by the Apoſtle, *If God be with vs, who can be againſt vs?* This ſentence doth not denie, but that good men, euen in a good courſe, may haue enemies: but

but it doth import this comfort, that the oppoſition which is made vnto them, cannot hurt them; we may be caſt downe, but we cannot periſh: Our ennemies may trouble vs, but cannot ouercome vs. Yea, *capitis pœnã nos poſſunt afficere, nocere non poſſunt*, they may take the head from vs, but cannot hurt vs. It is not for this life they fight, who haue laide holde on eternall life; our joy, and our crowne none are able to take from vs. *Verè enim tuta pro Chriſto, & cum Chriſto pugna, in qua nec vulneratus, nec occiſus, fraudabitis victoria*. There is no danger in that battaile wherein we fight for Chriſt, and with Chriſt, for we are ſure, that whether we be wounded, or ſlaine, we ſhall not be defrauded of the victory. *Iacob* here a good man is in a good courſe, for he is trauayling at the Lords commaund from *Padan Aram* vnto *Canaan*, yet is he troubled with enemies: for *Laban* pur-

Iuſt. Mart. apol. 2. ad Anton. Imp.

ker.

Yet good mẽ may be croſſed in a good courſe.

purſues him behind, and *Eſau* commeth againſt him before; but both of them labour in vaine, becauſe God is with him. The Lord doth in ſuch ſort bridle the rage of *Laban*, that albeit he marched after *Iacob* more furiouſlie then *Iehu* the ſonne of *Nimſhi* marched after *Iehoram*, thinking to ſatisfie his diſcontented mind, by reducing *Iacob* to a greater ſlauerie then he was in before: yet the Lord puts inhibition to the concluſions of his hart, and makes him fayne to ſue for *Iacobs* frendſhip, and to enter in a couenant of peace with him. Yea, which is more comfortable, the Lord maketh *Laban* himſelfe a preacher of Gods prouidence in mercy watching ouer *Iacob*. Thus the Lord bridleth *Laban*, and ſends him backe againe to his owne harme, without doing harme to *Iacob*, or any of his. And as to *Eſau* the Lord in like manner changes his cruell hart, & makes him

2. King. 9. 20.

But God ſhall either bridle, or change, or confounde their enemies.

him fauourable to *Iacob*, ſo that the ſame handes, wherewith once hee thought to haue ſlaine him, embraces him, and with the ſame mouth that once vowed to haue his life, hee kiſſes him: ſo ſure are they vnto whom the Lord is a protector. For *when the waies of a man pleaſe the Lord, he can make his enemies, his friends.* Prou.

If ye will marke and conſider this hiſtory, that the Lord ſo carefully waites vpon his ſeruant *Iacob*, that for euery trouble which ariſes to him he acquaintes him euer with ſome new, and ſingular conſolation. In the beginning of this Chapter, the Angels of the Lord appeared vnto *Iacob*, to comfort him, they brought him, in effect, this meſſage from the Lord: Feare not, O *Iacob*, the power and malice of thy brother *Eſau*, for here are we the hoſt of the liuing God to goe with thee, and aſſiſt thee, conforme to the promiſe of protection

As the ſufferinges of Chriſt abounds in vs, ſo his conſolations aboundeth. 2. Cor. 1. 5. verſe. 2.

on in thy journey, that God made to thee in *Bethel*, wherein thou saweſt the Angels aſcending, and deſcending vpon the Ladder: we are now ſent to waite vpon thee; as we conueyed thee in thy comming, ſo are we now ſafely to conuey thee in thy returning, in deſpite of all that will appone themſelues vnto thee. This viſion no doubt did confirme the hart of *Iacob* for a while, and encouraged him to the journey: yet ſoone after he is troubled with a new feare. The report of his meſſengers, who told him, that *Eſau* was comming againſt him with foure hundred men, doth in ſuch ſort diſquiet his mind, that he forgets his former comforts, and he becomes exceedingly afraid.

An Image of our naturall weakneſſe.

And in this euery one of vs may ſee an image of our owne weakeneſſe. *Iacob* had many proofes and experiences of Gods mercie; it is not long ſince he got joyfull deliuerance from

from *Laban*, and since the Lord, as I haue said, comforted him by the ministerie of his Angels: and yet now beholde how small a thing discourages him: certainly such is the weakneſſe of the deareſt children of God, that it is not one confirmation, yea not many experiences of mercy, that will sustaine vs, but we haue neede continuallie, and hourelie, to bee strengthned with new grace of corroboration. Plants that are set in the earth, require watering when they are young, & corne that growes in the field, without the first, and latter raine, comes not to maturitie and perfection: but we, vnleſſe that euery houre the raine of heauenly grace descend vpon vs from God, or at the leaſt, his dewe distill into our harts, by a secret, and vnperceaued manner, cannot possiblie stand; no, not one moment, in the state of grace. Euery spirituall desertion manifests our

We haue neede that the Lord should euery day renewe his mercies towardes vs.

our weakenes, the voice of a Damoi-
sell ſhall ſhake vs, as it did *Peter*; the
rumor of a trouble ſhall affray vs,
as here it affraies *Iacob*: it is the Lords
countenance which maketh vs to
liue. *Cauſe thy face ô Lord to ſhine vpon vs, and we ſhall be ſafe.*

Psal. 80.

Not once, but often doe the godly fall, & that manytimes in one & the ſelfe ſame ſinne.

Abraham in *Egypt* gotte a nota-
ble proofe of the Lordes prouident
mercie waiting ouer him, reſeruing
Sarah inuiolate, when he had expo-
ned hir chaſtitie to the concupiſ-
cence of an Ethnike king *Pharaoh*,
but was this experience of God his
mercy ſufficient to confirme him
and make him ſtrong againſt the like
tentation in time to come? No ſure-
ly, for ſhortly thereafter in *Gerah*, a-
mong the *Philiſtins* he falles into the
ſame ſinne of fearefull diſtruſt; ſo
that againe the ſecond time he ſeekes
the preſeruation of his life, by ha-
zarding the chaſtity of *Sarah*: and
that worthy Prophet *Samuell*, albeit
he

Gen. 12.

1. Sam.

he found many a time the Lordes preſence with him, aſsiſting him in ſuch ſort, that he ſuffered none of his wordes fall to the ground, yet when God commaunded him goe, and anoynt *Dauid*, he refuſed at the firſt, and why? becauſe he feared leaſt *Saul* ſhould ſlay him. Who would thinke that ſuch weaknes had beene in the man of God, that hauing the word of the Lord for his warrant, he ſhould yet be afrayd of the countenance of man? Thus now and then hath the Lord giuen to the beſt of his children, a proofe of their own weaknes, that we looking vnto them, might be humbled within our ſelues, knowing that we are nothing without the Lord. As *Eutichus* fell from his ſeate in the window, wherein hee ſate hearing *Paul* preach: ſo haue we our owne ſownings, whereby many times we fall from the ſeat of our deuotion, from the full aſſu-

Wee haue our ſpiritu all fayntings, and ſownings, warning vs of our own weakneſſe. Acts.

rance of faith, which cauſes confidence, from the ſence of mercie, and ſpirituall joy riſing thereof into horrible diſtruſt, and fearefull perturbations; ſo that wee become almoſt dead, hartleſſe, comfortleſſe, and without feeling. But bleſſed be the Lord, who euen at thoſe times, *doth keepe our ſoules in life*, & lifts vs againe in his armes more louingly, then *Paul* did *Eutichus*, he ſets vs againe on our feete, he renewes his mercies, and reſtoreth his former joyes vnto vs. Let it therefore neuer goe out of our mindes, that *God is the ſtrength of our life*, without whoſe grace we haue no ſtanding, that ſo our eyes and our hartes may be continually aduanced towards him, deſiring the Lord to be with vs, and at no time to leaue vs. In all the courſe of our life, let vs ſay to the Lord with *Moſes*, *I will not goe forward one foote, except thou goe with me*: otherwiſe we ſhall faint

Pſal. And that God is the ſtrength of our life.

faint vnder euery burden, ſtumble at euery impediment, and fall vnder the leaſt tentation, that ſhall ouertake vs: but if the Lord be with vs, *we ſhall be able to doe all thinges through him, that comforts vs.*

Notwithſtanding, for this infirmity in *Iacob*, the Lord doth not reject him, but rather, like a louing father, handles him ſo much the more tenderly. It is the Lords praiſe and our comfort, *He breaks not the bruſed reed, and quenches not the ſmoaking flax, he is the God, who comforts the abiect, & bindeth vp the broken in hart.* It was not for *Iacob* his worthines, that the Lord did firſt chuſe him, and now for his weakeneſſe he will not reject him: therefore doth he now appeare to *Iacob* in his neede, and miniſter vnto him greater comfort, then any he got before. In the beginning of the Chapter, the Lord ſent his Angels, his miniſtring ſpirits to comfort him,

Gods fatherly cõpaſsion appeares, in that he hãdles vs moſt tenderly whẽ wee are weakeſt.

and now, becauſe *Iacob* yet is in feare, in the end of the Chapter, ye ſee how he comes himſelfe, & comforts him. Such is thy tender mercy O Lord towards theſe, whome once thou haſt choſen to be thine, that thou wilt neuer forſake them ſurely, *becauſe thou art not changed, therefore it is, that wee are not conſumed, though we fall, thou wilt put vnder thine hand, and raiſe vs vp againe*, and makeſt thy laſt comfort alwaies the greateſt.

Malac. 3.

Pſ. 37. 24.

This rare viſion teacheth the manner of Gods wreſtling with his childrē

The viſion is rare, the like not againe to be found in all the booke of God: yet moſt profitable for our edification, as conteyning in it an exemplar of Gods wreſtling with his owne children, and therefore meete to be conſidered of al the good ſouldiers of Ieſus Chriſt, wreſtlers in the ſpiritual warfare. And therefore, for the better vnderſtanding of it, and giuing greater light to the whole ſtorie, in the entrie wee ſhall permit theſe

theſe three things God willing. Firſt what moued the Lord at this time to appeare to his ſeruant *Iacob*. Next, what is the forme, and manner of the Lordes apparition. And thirdly, what is the end of it.

3 things to be permitted for vnderſtādin, this viſion.

The cauſe mouing the Lord to appeare vnto *Iacob*, was the hard eſtate wherein his ſeruant ſtoode at this time. For *Iacob* is now in great anguiſh of mind, tumbling as it were betweene feare and confidence, betweene hope and deſpaire; hope bidding him go forward in his journey, deſpaire by the contrary diſſwading him; confidence promiſing him ſafety, feare threatning him with danger. His hope leanes on the worde of God, who promiſed to bee with him, & proſper him: his feare is conceaued of the words of *Eſau*, who had vowed to ſlay him, & is now wakened againe, and augmented by the report of his ſeruants, who told him

I.

The cauſe mouing the Lord to appeare to Iacob, at this time.

Iacobs perplexity.

that *Eſau* was comming againſt him with an armie. Thus did he walke ſtaggering vpon feete, not vnlike the
Dan. feete of *Daniels* image, *partly of clay, partly of iron:* ſome of his thoughtes being weake, and impotent; others ſtrong and forcible to carry him forward. In this perplexity now ſtands *Iacob*, hauing no concluſion, nor councel within him; without contradiction, vncertaine what to doe, or which way to turne him: not vnlike *Iehoſaphat*, who being ſtraited with
2. Chro. 20 the *Ammonites*, *Moabites*, and *Edomites*, ſtoode vp before the Lord, and ſaid, *O Lord there is no ſtrength in vs, to ſtand againſt this great multitude, neither doe we knowe what to doe, but our eyes are towarde thee*. In like manner ſay I, doth *Iacob* here; being aſſalted with a force, he was not able to reſiſt, he turnes him to the Lord, and expones to the Lord in humble manner his
Verſ. 11. feare: *Deliuer me O Lord from the hand*

of

of my brother Eſau, *for I feare him, leaſt he come vpon me, and ſmite me, and the mother vpon the children*. Therefore is it that now the Lord comes, as in due ſeaſon, and conuenient time, to ſhew himſelfe for the comfort of his ſeruant. No help for *Iacob* in man, the Lord puts to his right hand, and comforts him. *Ibi enim incipit diuinum auxilium, vbi deficit humanum*. When all other helpes faile, the children of God, then commeth in the help of God, for he knowes beſt the very point, & article of time, wherein it is meete that he ſhould kyth the deliuerer of them, who waite vpon him.

The help of God begins when other help faileth.

As to the manner of the apparition, the Lord is not content to anſwere *Iacob* by word only, nor by ſending ſecretly patience and comfort to his troubled ſpirit (which way many a time he anſweres the prayers of his owne) but he confirmes him

2 The manner of the Lords apparition, is both by word, and viſion.

by an extraordinary viſion. For he appeares to *Iacob* in the forme of a man, and wreſtles with him, he aſſays him not with a ſuperior ſtrength which he was not able to withſtand, but applies himſelfe to *Iacobs* weaknes, & diſpoſes the wreſtling in ſuch a manner, that *Iacob* gets the victory, albeit not without a wound, for his thigh-bone is disjoynted, and put out of lith, ſo that he halteth all the daies of his life, which, as for the preſent time it was a matter of his humiliation, being a diſcouery of his weaknes, and of the Lordes indulgence, whereby only he preuayled as victor in the combat, ſo was it for all time to come, a memoriall, and remembrance vnto him of this moſt comfortable apparition.

3 The end of the Lords apparition

And as to the end of the Lordes appearing, the end, ſaith *Theodoret*, was the confirmation of *Iacobs* hart againſt feare; *ideo enim Angelus cum*

Iacob

Iacob *luctari voluit, vt iumenti fratrem fiduciam iniceret*. And this yee may perceiue out of the words which the Lord vtters when the wreſtling is ended. *Thou haſt wreſtled with God, and ſhalt alſo preuaile with men*. Feare not therefore (will the Lord ſay) O my ſeruant *Iacob*, to encounter with *Eſau*, who is but a mortal man; I, who haue furniſhed thee with ſtrength to ſtand in this wreſtling with God, ſhall furniſh thee with ſtrength alſo in all thy conflicts with men, & thou ſhalt preuaile. This is the ground of all our comfort in trouble, which if we could remember, then would we not be caſt downe, nor diſquieted with feares, *but would ſanctifie the Lord of hoſts in our harts, and make him our feare*. It is not in our name, nor ſtrength, nor in the power of nature that we ſtand and wreſtle. We goe forth againſt our *Goliath* in the name of our God, weake in our ſelues, yet in

is Iacobs confirmation.

Eſa. 8. 13.

Cyp. lib. 2. epiſt. 6.

in him *more then conquerours: Maior enim eſt, qui præeſt in nobis, quam qui in hoc mundo, nec plus ad deijciendum poteſt terrena pœna, quam ad erigendum diuina tutela*. He is ſtronger that rules in vs, then the Prince of this world. Neyther are theſe euilles which earthly men are able to inflict vppon vs, ſo forcible to caſt vs downe, as the heauenly help is able to raiſe vs vp: let vs alwaies walke forward in this our ſtrength. Pſal. 27. *The Lord is my light and ſaluation, the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom then ſhall I be afraid?*

How meruailouſlie God in dealing with his children workes by cõtraries.

But now, before that yet wee enter into the particulars, let vs marke this profitable leſſon, that vpon the grounds I haue laide, ariſe to be obſerued. If wee conſider what is the Lords purpoſe and intention, what againe are the meanes that hee vſes, to bring about his purpoſe: and yee ſhall ſee that the Lord vſeth meanes, which appeares contrary to his end.

His

His purpoſe is to confirme *Iacob*, the meanes hee vſeth, is wreſtling with *Iacob*; a ſtrange maner of working, that the Lord ſhould ſhake him hee mindes to ſtrengthen, that he ſhould wound him, whome hee purpoſes to confirme: and thus, and this manner of way, on a ſodaine, terrifie, by vncouth wreſtling, in the night, and in ſolitarie place, his ſeruant, whom he came to comfort; but ſo it is, the working of the Lord ofttimes is by contraries. In the firſt worke of creation, hee made all things of nothing, *He commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſſe.* Hee formed the body of man, his moſt excellent earthly creature of the baſeſt matter, duſt, and clay: of the vileſt creature, hee made the moſt honorable, and all to ſhew the glorie of his power. In the woorke of redemption in like manner, our Sauiour Ieſus, by ſuſtaining ſhame, hath conquered to vs, glorie, by in-

So did hee woorke in them the worke of creation.

So alſo in the worke of redemtion.

during

during the Croſſe, hath obtained the crowne; by ſuffring death, hath deſtroyed death, and him who had the power therof: and after the ſame manner of working, he is yet daily *Maruellous in his Saints:* By death he brings them vnto life; *He killes, and he makes aliue.* Through doubtings, he leades them to aſſurance; by temporall deſpaire hee brings them to abound in hope; hee affraies them with his terrours, to make them the more capable of his conſolations. It is ſtrange, and maruelous in our eies; may not wee learne it by daily experience, that God deliuereth vs from Satan, by letting Satan looſe for a while vpon vs? He ſaues vs from our ſinnes, by gathering all our ſins againſt vs, and laying them to the charge of our conſcience, and by a preſent feeling of his wrath, he maketh vs flee that terrible wrath which is to come.

And ſo daily in his Saintes. Pſal.

Be

We ſhuld not therefore be diſcouraged when god ſeemes vncouth and ſtrange to vs.

Be not therefore diſcouraged, yee who find this working of the Lord, faint not though the Lord after this manner doe exerciſe you, that when ye crie for mercy, yet to your feeling ye apprehend nothing but anger: reuerence the working of God, ſuppoſe for the preſent yee vnderſtand it not; lette the Lord walke on his owne way, and waite thou with patience for comfort in the end, *The Lord will ſend a gratious raine vppon his inheritance to refreſh it, when it is weary: though he kill vs, hee ſhall make vs to liue againe.* When hee hath humbled vs tothe graue, yet will hee raiſe vs againe. *After two dayes hee will reuiue vs, and in the third, hee ſhall raiſe vs vp, and we ſhall liue in his ſight.* It is no rotten foundation wee leane to; *The foundation of the Lorde remaines ſure,* and therefore, *Albeit the Lord ſhould ſlay vs, yet will we truſt in him.* He ſent a fearefull darkeneſſe on *Abraham* or euer

Pſal.

Hoſ. 6.

Tim.

Geneſ. Actes

euer he shewed him the comfortable vision. He strooke *Paul* vnto the ground, and confounded him, before that he conuerted him; he strake him with blindnesse, or euer hee opened his eies; hee beganne hardly with *Iacob*, but ends with a blessing; at the first hee dealt rigorously in his answers with the woman of *Canaan*, but in the end, comforted her. As *Ioseph* for a long time made it strang with his brethren, but at length his inflamed affection compell'd him to embrace them: So the Lord, though he make a shew of an angry countenaunce towards his owne, yet his inestimable loue, and fatherly compassion shall force him to reueale himselfe vnto them in the sweetenesse of his mercie: *For a little while haue I forsaken thee, for a moment, in mine anger, (as it seemed) I hid my face from thee for a litle seson, but with euerlasting mercie haue I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord*

Esay 54. 7. For in the end he shal shew himselfe a louing father to his own.

Lord thy redeemer. We ſhall perceiue in the ende, that which now in the middes of trouble we ſee not: thogh in our affliction wee take him vp as an aduerſarie, through the weaknes of our faith, yet ſhall we finde, that then God was with vs, working for our deliuerance, when he ſeemed to be againſt vs. Lette vs not therefore be caſt downe when the Lord worketh with vs, after his owne manner of working, by meanes vnknowne to vs. Let vs learne of *Iacob* to wreſtle with the Lord; and with that woman of *Canaan*, cleaue to him the faſter, that hee ſeeme to put vs away: we ſhall feele in the end, *The Lord is neere vnto them who are of a contrite heart, and will ſaue ſuch as be afflicted in ſpirite.* Yea, wee ſhall with *Dauid* rejoyce and glorie in the Lord, *It is good for me that euer the Lord corrected me*; The Lord be bleſſed therefore, for hee hath ſhewne his maruellous kind- Pſal. 119.

kindneſſe towardes me.

Diuiſion of the Hiſtory.

1 The wreſtling, and circúſtãces thereof.

2 The Conference betwixt God and Iacob

It is now time that wee enter into the Hiſtory it ſelfe, which hath theſe two partes: The firſt ſets downe the Angells wreſtling with *Iacob:* The ſecond containes the conference of the Angell with *Iacob*, which follows vpon the wreſtling. As for the wreſtling, wee haue in it fiue things to be conſidered: firſt, the time of it: next, the perſons between whom: thirdly, the manner of the wreſtling, whether corporall onely, ſpirituall onlie, or mixt. Fourthly, how long continues the wreſtling. And laſt of all, the euent, and iſſue of this wreſtling.

1 Firſt circumſtance the time of the wreſtling.

As to the firſt, the circumſtance of time is noted by *Moſes*, *When Iacob* (ſaieth he) *was left alone*. Amongeſt many reaſons that might moue *Iacob* to be alone, I incline to none more than this: he ſought to be ſolitary, to the end hee might haue the fitter occaſion to pray, and powre out his griefe

griefe the more freely and homely into the Lords boſome. For wee knowe that the preſence of men is oftentimes a great impediment of the free communing of our ſoules with God, and that the children of God wil boldly cõmunicate thoſe ſecrets to the Lord, which they wil not vtter to their dereſt friends. We haue here then to learne at *Iacob*, ſometime to withdrawe our ſelues from the deareſt company of men, that wee may haue the better occaſion, by prayer, to conferre with our God. *For he who loueth wiſdome, will ſeperate himſelfe to ſeeke it*. Yet are we to remember that ſolitarines auailes not without, vnleſſe there bee ſilence within: For though the body be remoued from the eyes of men, if the ſoule in the meane time be diſquieted with bandes of reſtleſſe, and troubleſome motions, it is not poſsible that we can pray, *Maxima eſt ſegnitia alienari*

Solitarines cõuenient for prayer.

Pro. 18. 1.

And yet ſolitarines a-

uailes not withoutinward attẽtion. *Cyp. de orat. dom.*

nari & capi ineptis cogitationibus, cum dominum deprecaris, quaſi ſit aliquid, quod magis debeas cogitare, quam quod cum Deo loquaris, quomodo te audiri à Deo poſtulas, cum te ipſe non audias, vis Deum memorem eſſe tui cum rogas, cum tu ipſe memor tui non ſis, hoc eſt ab hoſte in totum non cauere, hoc eſt vigilare oculis & corde dormire, cum debeat chriſtianus, etiam cum dormit oculus, corde vigilare. It is (ſaith *Cyprian*) a very great ſloath to be alienate, & carried away with vnmeete cogitations whē thou prayeſt vnto God: as if there were any thing whereof thou ſhouldeſt thinke more then this, that thou art ſpeaking with God. How deſireſt thou that God ſhould heare thee, when thou heareſt not thy ſelfe? or that he ſhould be mindfull of thee, who art not mindfull of thy ſelfe? By ſo doing, thou art not ware enough of thy enemie, this is to watch with thine eyes, and ſleepe with thy hart, whereas

as it becomes a chriſtan, euen to wake with the hart, when the eye is aſleepe: *I ſleepe, but my hart waketh.* Cant.

When therefore we goe to pray, we muſt doe, as did our Sauiour, when he went to raiſe *Tabitha* from the dead, he put the minſtrelles and the mourners to the dore; and wee muſt put worldly thoughts out of our mindes, tollerable ſeruants (if ſo be we vſe them as ſeruants) at an other time, but no way tollerable in the time of prayer: Like the aſſes and ſeruants of *Abraham*, which he vſed as helpes to carrie him forward in his journey, but left them at the foote of the mountaine, when hee went vp to pray, and ſacrifice to the Lord. And thus the perturbations of our mindes within being quieted, then let vs eſchew, as farre as poſsibly we can, all occaſions of diſtractions without vs. Let vs with his ſpouſe in the Canticles, *follow our huſ-*

What preparation ſhould goe before prayer.

Cant. Pſal.4. Mat. 6. 5. Dan. Act.

band to the fields, and there talke with him: or with *Dauid*, *let vs examine our harts vpon our beddes and be ſtill*: or as our Sauiour commandeth vs: *Let vs enter into our chamber and ſhut the dore, and there in ſecret pray to our heauenly father*. After this manner went *Daniel* to his chamber alone, and *Peter* to the top of the houſe alone, and Ieſus Chriſt went alone to the mountaine to pray all night. And ſo much the more earneſtly ſhould wee practiſe this leſſon, becauſe now, by *Iacobs* example, we learne, that then the Lord doth deale moſt familiarly to ſhew himſelfe vnto vs, when we are beſt content to ſeperate our ſelues from all other pleaſures, that we may get conference with the Lord: whereas by the contrary, when we neglect to ſeeke him, and will not doe ſo much as redeeme a time and occaſion to ſpeake with him, by forgoing for a while, the company of men, the Lord

How carefull wee ſhould be, & why to ſeeke occaſions to pray.

Neglect of prayer is a contẽning of God.

Lord accounts that he is diſhonoured of vs, that we are ſuch, as haue litle delight in the Lord, yea prefers euery thing vnto him: and therefore alſo it is, that the Lord delightes not to be homely with vs, and to acquaint vs with his familiar preſence, becauſe we doe not carefully waite vpon him.

The Lord therefore encreaſe in vs this delight and diſpoſition to pray, that we may eſteeme it a benefit and vantage to vs, to haue the leaſt occaſion to pray, for it was neuer yet ſeene, but that a hart to pray hath euer beene an vndoubted forerunner of a ſpeciall bleſsing of God to enſue. *If we open our mouth wide, the Lord ſhal fill it:* ſeeking, muſt goe before finding, and we muſt knocke, before it be opened. If we haue the firſt, we may be ſure of the ſecond. Our Sauiour hath aſſured vs, that our heauenly father will giue his holy ſpirit

True prayer alwaies returnes with profit to vs.

Pſal.

to them who deſires him. When *Abraham* prayed to the Lord, the Lord anſwered him in ſuch ſort, that euery petition he ſent forth, returned backe with ſome newe gaine: at ſix petitions, he brought the Lord from fiftie to tenne, that the Lord promiſed to ſpare all *Sodome* for tenne righteous. And that which is moſt comfortable, the Lord left not off anſwering, till firſt *Abraham* ceaſed from praying. As that oyle miraculouſly multiplyed by *Eliſha* continued ſo long, as the poore widdowe had an empty veſſell, wherein to receaue it: ſo may we be ſure that the grace of our God, ſhall without ceaſing be multiplyed vpon vs, ſo long as our harts are enlarged to call vpon him. *Bleſſed are they, who hunger and thirſt for righteouſnes, for they ſhall be ſatisfied.*

Gen.

How at ſix petitions, Abraham brought the Lord from fiftie to tenne.

Mat. 5.

2 The ſecond circum-

The ſecond thing that here comes to be conſidered, is the perſons, betweene whome the wreſtling is. He that

that wreſtles here with *Iacob*, is not a Man, albeit *Moſes* ſo calleth him, becauſe ſo he appeares: neyther is he a created Angell, albeit *Hoſea* call him an Angell of God. But he who wreſtles is the ſonne of God, the great Angell of the couenant, *His homo verus Deus eſt, non ex nuncupatione, ſed natura.* He it is, who in this combat is the wreſtler with *Iacob.*

ſtance, the perſons betweene whome the wreſtling is

Chryſoſt. in gen. 32.

Where firſt it is to bee ſpeared, how it is, that Ieſus Chriſt appeared to the Fathers vnder the law in forme and ſhape of a man, he not being yet incarnate, and made man indeede. The anſwere is, that appearing of Chriſt in forme of a man, was, as *Tertullian* calleth it, *Præludium humanitatis*, a pre-ſignification of his manifeſtation after in the fleſh: but there is a great difference, betweene that appearing, and his incarnation that followed, *in the fulneſſe of time.* For firſt, albeit Chriſt, before his incarnation,

Howe, as mā, Chriſt appeared to the Fathers before his incarnation.

Galath.

Difference betweene Chriſtes apparitiõ, & his manifeſtation after in the fleſh.

tooke on verely the body of man; yet was he not then a man indeede, he was not then *the ſeede of the woman*, but when the fulneſſe of time came, God ſent his Son in the world made of a woman, *then the word was made fleſh:* then tooke hee on the ſeede of *Abraham*, and became *in all things man like vnto vs, except ſinne*: then he aſſumed our nature, and joyned it into one ſubſiſtance with his diuine nature, that is, into one perſonall vnion, for the ſtraitneſſe of the which conjunction, it is ſaid, and moſt truly, that Chriſt Ieſus, Man, is God, & Chriſt Ieſus, God, is Man: which before his incarnation could not be ſaid of him. Secondly, whereby Chriſt vnder the lawe tooke on the body of of man, was but temporall, and for the doing of ſome particular errand, which ſo ſoone as he had finiſhed, he laid away againe. But Chriſt Ieſus hath now aſſumed the nature of man,

neuer

neuer to be laid away againe: as he hath joyned our nature, with his diuine nature in a perſonall vnion, ſo alſo in an euerlaſting vnion: ſo that there ſhall neuer be a ſeparation betweene them.

Alway in this manner of Chriſtes appearing vnto *Iacob*, and other of his ſeruants before the lawe: lette vs take vp the loue of Ieſus toward his owne, that for their ſake he is content to abaſe his Majeſty, and appeare to his ſeruants, not in a ſhape anſwerable to his glory, but in ſuch a forme, as their weakeneſſe might beſt compert with: for what kinde of more homely and familiar apparition can God vſe to man, than to appeare as a man in the ſhape moſt familiar to man. Not as God, clad with glory and majeſty, for that way no fleſh might abide him. In this (O Lord) thou haſt ſhewed thy goodnes to Man, in this our fathers, *Abraham*,

Chriſtes loue is ſeen in his familiar apparition to the fathers before the Lawe.

ham, *Isaac*, and *Iacob* had a proofe of thy louing kindneſſe: and in this, all thy children may ſee what great account thou mak'ſt of them who loue and feare thy holy name.

But more abundantly hath he ſhewed his loue to vs in this laſt age.

But what is all this, if it bee compared with that which after followed, I do meane with that great loue, which nowe in this laſt Age of the world, according to the trueth of his promiſes hee hath ſhewed vnto his church, in that he hath kept the preciſe, promiſed, and appoynted period of time, wherein hee hath appeared to his church, not in ſhape of a man onely, as hee did to our fathers, but in the very nature of man. A Man indeede, albeit not made Man, after the manner of other men: *For hee is the Stone cut out of the mountaine without handes:* Hee was not made Man by the operation of Man: *Hee is a flower of the field*, not of the garden; hee grew vp like a *Branch out*

Iræn. contr. Valent lib. 3. cap. 28 Bern. Ser 2. de Aduent. Dom.

of

of the roote of Ieſſe : but not by the ordinary labour of a Gardiner. *Hee is the ſecond Adam*, very Man, but not begotten by Man : *He being the God of glorie, made himſelfe of no reputation, hee tooke vpon him the ſhape of a ſeruant, and was made like vnto men :* and al this hee did, that in our nature hee might worke the work of our redemption. Hee came downe from the boſome of his father, as the great Angell of his councell to reueale to vs his Fathers will concerning our ſaluation. It is not cuſtomable, that honorable perſonages ſhould come to the poorer, but his compaſsion of our neceſsities conſtrayned him : *Iacentes enim paralytici in grabbato, diuinam illam non poteramus attingere ceſsitudinem :* For we lying ſicke of the palſie in our cowch, were not able to reach vnto that diuine and high majeſty; therefore hee humbled himſelfe to come vnto vs, becauſe we were not able

Iren. contr. Valent. lib. 3. cap. 31

Tertullian. de carne Chriſti. Philip. 2. 7.

Ber. de aduentu Dom. Serm. 1.

able to go vnto him.

Man loſt himſelfe aſpiring to be like vnto God: Chriſt has ſaued Man by humbling himſelfe to become like man.

And heerein hath hee vttered toward man, his wonderful loue. Man being man, onely aſpired to be like vnto God, and ſo loſt himſelfe, that now he is become worſe than a *companion to the beaſts*: But Ieſus being very God, was content to become Man, that hee might ſaue man, who was loſt. O howe hath the loue of Ieſus ouercome our ingratitude! hee became the ſonne of Man, to make vs the ſonnes of God, he hath taken on him our ſinnes, and giuen to vs his righteouſneſſe, hee refuſed not to vnderly that death, which was due vnto vs, that hee might make vs partakers of his life. In a word, *Quod homo eſt, Chriſtus voluit eſſe, vt homo poſſit eſſe, quod Chriſtus eſt:* That which Man is, Chriſt would be, that Man might be made that which Chriſt is: and therefore, *Hmmiliauit ſe, vt populum qui iacebat erigeret, vulneratus eſt,*

Cyprian. de idol. vanit.

Cyprian. de Eleemoſ.

vt

vt vulnera noſtra ſanaret, ſeruiuit, vt ad libertatem ſeruientes extraheret, mori ſuſtinuit vt moriens immortalitatem mortalibus exhiberet. Hee was humbled himſelfe, that hee might raiſe vp his people lying in bondage: Hee was wounded for our tranſgreſsions, that by his ſtripes we might be healed: He became a ſeruant, that wee who were ſeruants might be reſtor'd to liberty: Hee ſuffered death, that he dying might giue immortality to vs that are mortall. This is, O Lord, the greatnes of thy loue towards vs, the length, and breadth, the height, and depth *whereof all thy Saints are not able to comprehend:* But O Lord grant that wee may daily growe in the feeling thereof, that with joy of heart wee may reſigne our ſelues fully to thine onely ſeruice, who ſo willingly haſt giuen thy ſelfe to be ours.

Eſay 53.5

Ephes.

But to returne to the conſideration of the perſons; who wreſtles, yee may

How is it that weake manne in

wreſtling ſhould be partie to the mighty God.

may maruell, what wreſtling can be, betweene parties ſo vnequall, betweene God, and Man, betweene the Creator and the Creature, betweene the Potter and his veſſell. When the Lord is angry, the foundations of the mountaines and earth doe ſhake. *He breakes downe, and it cannot be built, he ſhuttes vp, and it cannot be looſed. The pillars of heauen tremble, and quake at his reproofe: at his rebuke he aries vp the Sea, and maketh the floud deſart, their fiſh rotte for want of water, and die for thirſt. Hee clothes the heauens with darkeneſſe: hee biddeth his lightning walke, and they ſay, Loe, heere we are: hee maketh the potte to boyle, like a potte of oyntment, who is able to ſtand before this holie Lord?* And how then is it that *Iacob* is brought in here as a wreſtler with the Lord? But here ye muſt conſider the parties, as they are ſet downe in this conflict by *Moſes*.

Pſalme 18.

Iob 12.

Iob 26.

Eſay 50.
Iob 38.
Iob 41.
1. Sam. 6.

Becauſe God vtte-

The Lord in this wreſtling vtters not

not himſelfe as the mighty God, hee kyths not himſelfe in his power, for ſo ſhould he eaſily haue confounded his creature, but the Lord vttereth himſelfe as a man, and a man in pith and ſtrength inferiour to *Iacob*. *Iacob* againe is heere to be conſidered, not as a ſimple man, nor as a manne wreſtling by his owne ſtrength; but as one ſtanding, and wreſtling by the ſtrength of God: and heereof commeth his preuailing in this battell. The Lord vtters himſelfe leſſe than he is, and makes vp *Iacob* much more than hee was. *Magna certè Dei miſericordia in figura hominis luctari voluit cum iuſto vt ſe illius humilitati attemperaret*. And this ſame is the Lordes dealing in all his wreſtling with his children. that neyther doth he vſe his ſtrength againſt them, nor yet leaue them to their owne weakeneſſe. If the Lord ſhould ſhew himſelfe a ſtrong God in wreſtling againſt

reth not his power, and holds vppe man by ſecret grace.

Chryſoſt. in Geneſ. 32

Otherwiſe Man could not ſtand before him.

gainſt vs, then indeede, none were able to ſtand before him. The three diſciples, at the ſight of Chriſts glorie, when hee was ttansfigurate on mount *Tabor*, fell to the ground aſtoniſhed. If ſinfull fleſh be not able to abide the ſight of his glorie; how ſhall it indure the dint of his power? and that which is moſt of all, howe could fraile man ſuſtaine the benſall of his wrath and anger, if the Lorde would intend it?

Heereof then commeth our ſtanding in theſe inward conflicts of conſcience, that *Our faithfull God ſuffers vs not to be tempted aboue our power:* he aſſailes vs not aboue our ſtrength: *He ſets not our ſinnes in order before vs*, that we ſhould ſee them as wee committed them. Hee permittes not his deputy the Conſcience to accuſe and torment vs according to the merite of our tranſgreſsions, hee mittigates the ſtroke of his rodde, and extenuates

2. Cori. 10. 13.
Pſalme 50.

ates the pith of his hand, when hee puttes at vs. And with this alſo by his ſecret grace he vnderproppes vs; otherwiſe no power ſhuld be found in weake man, to ſtand in the meaneſt of theſe battells, wherein GOD ſheweth himſelfe our aduerſary partie. Yea if the Lord ſhould ſet vppe one of our ſinnes to purſue vs, and then withdraw his ſecret grace from vs, wee ſhould fall in the deſperation of *Caine*, and *Iudas*. And if hee ſhould arme, but one of our owne cogitations agenſt vs, we ſhould become miſerable burrios to our ſelues, like *Saul* and *Achitophel*. If hee take his breath out of our noſthrilles, we fall to the ground: or if hee ſhoulde abſtract from vs the vſe of Reaſon which hee hath lent vs, wee become worſe than the beaſtes. Thus, neyther in inward, nor outward wreſtlings haue wee any ſtrength of our owne to ſtand before him.

In wreſtlings ſpirituall, God is both our aſſaulter & vpholder. Cypr. lib 2 epiſt.

Our ſtanding in trouble is onelie by the ſtrength of God, who ſuſtains vs: hee puts at vs with the one hand, and vnderprops vs with the other. It is God in vs, who ouercommeth, himſelfe opponing vnto vs, *Qui pro nobis mortem ſemel vicit, ſemper vincit in nobis.* And this ye may ſee cleerely in his dealing with that woman of *Canaan*, his audible voice was againſt her; but the ſecret help of his Spirit was with her: with one hand hee repelled her, and with the other, hee drew her heart neare vnto him.

Conſolation for the godly afflicted.

This I haue marked for thy conſolation, thou who arte the warrior, and wreſtler of God, that thou maiſt know, *God is the ſtrength of thy life:* and finding it ſo, maiſt be thankfull, and entertain his preſence with thee. For whereof (thinkſt thou) hath it come, that ſo many yeares thou haſt ſtood in the middes of ſo many tentations? that ſo long thou haſt indured theſe

ſpi-

ſpirituall wreſtlings, wherein thy conſcience, and God, who is greater than thy conſcience, hath ſtood vp thine accuſer? hath it come of any ſtrength in thee? None at all. *If the Lord had not holpen me, my Soul had almoſt dwelt in ſilence. It is the Lord that keepeth our Soules in life.* The Lorde who ſeemed our aduerſary, was our ſecret helper; he ſhooke vs with tentations, and ſuſtained vs with his grace: *Euen the Lord who wounded vs, did heale vs. The Lord is the deliuerer of our ſoule out of all aduerſitie.* Otherwiſe it had beene impoſsible for thee (O weake man) to haue holden vp thine head in the leaſt of theſe tentations; ouer which, nowe, through his grace, thou haſt preuailed, and obtained the victorie. *Not vnto vs therefore, O Lord, not vnto vs, but vnto thy name let the glorie be giuen.*

Pſal. 94. 17

Pſal. 66. 9

Hoſ. 6.

Pſal.

It is againe heere to be marked, that the Lorde, when hee appeareth

The Lord will not

giue his children immunitie from troubles.

moſt familiarly to *Iacob*, hee exerciſes him with a wearyſome wreſtling; the ſodainety and nouelty whereof, no doubt, at the firſt, did greatly terrifie and diſquiet him. The Lorde then when hee comes to *Iacob*, dooth not caſt him aſleepe into careleſſe ſecuritie, but he toſſes and ſhakes him to and fro, and exerciſes him with fighting and ſtruggling all the night long; whereof we may learne, that euen when the Lord is neareſt, and moſt familiar with vs, then oftentimes our tentations and wreſtlings will be greateſt. So ſoone as *Iacob* got the firſt bleſsing, therefore with all incontinent, hee behooued to ſuſtaine the inimitie of *Eſau*, and was forced, for eſchewing his cruelty, to vndergoe baniſhment. And nowe when the Lord comes to bleſſe him againe, he firſt wakes and prepares him by tentation. This is the order of the Lordes working: *Bleſſed is the*

Iam. 1.12.

man,

man, who endureth tentation, for when he is tried, he shall receiue the crowne of life, which the Lorde hath promised to them who loue him.

It is not then true, which sometime the weak conscience doth conceiue and apprehend, that spirituall exercises, wrestlings, and fightings against tentations, are tokens of desertion, of the Lordes absence, and departure from vs: By the contrary, they are sure witnesses of the Lordes familiar presence with vs, whether we fight with the *Spirituall weapons of our warfare against carnall men* without vs, or against our owne infidelitie, and rebellious affections, laboring to subdue them, *and bring them captiues to Christs obedience:* or against any other of Sathans temptations, standing with the compleate armour of God, at all occasions to resist him. All these wrestlings, I say, are vndoubted tokens of a spirituall life

Spirituall wrestling a witnes of Gods familiar presence with vs.

2. Corinth.

within vs, and of the Lords preſence with vs in mercie and forerunners of a farther bleſsing; for as the carnall peace, and ſecuritie of the wicked, ends into deſtruction: *and their pride goeth before a fall: when they ſay, peace and ſafetie, then ſhall come vpon them ſodaine deſtruction*; like that which fell on the Philiſtins in the mids of their carnall rejoycing (the pillars of their houſe were not ſure enough to ſuſtaine them) ſo the inward humiliation of gods children, is ay a good token, a ſure argument of approching grace. But as to the wicked, with whome the Lord is not, they are no wreſtlers againſt Sathan and ſinne, for they are dead in ſinne and treſpaſſes, and haue rendred themſelues priſoners, and captiues vnto Satan, *and are taken of him captiues at his will*: they liue vnder a miſerable peace with the enemy of their ſaluation. If he wound them, they mourne not, if he

Prouer. 1. Theſ. 5. 3.

The wicked being dead captiues cannot fight.

2. Tim.

he commaund them, they reſiſt not. And ſuch (alas) are many in this age, whoſe eyes it may pleaſe the Lord to open, that they may ſee that miſerable ſtate wherein they do ſtand; and once may be mooued by his Spirite, to ſigh vnder this heauie ſeruitude, and bondage vnto God for deliuerance.

But as for you, whome God hath ſet at inimity with the ſerpent, and entred to fight in that battell, which once was proclaimed in Paradiſe, & wherein all the ſouldiers of that *bleſſed Seede of the woman*, muſt fight by courſe vnto the end of the worlde. Bleſſed are yee, for heereby ye may know, that the Lord hath looſed the chaines of your captiuity. Ye are no more the ſlaues and priſoners of Satan, but by grace, warriours againſt him; yee ſtand on that ſide whereof the captaine is, that triumphant conquerour, the victorious *Lion of the* Reuelat.

Comfort for Chriſts ſouldiers.

Rom.

Wreſtling a ſure token of ſpirituall life.

tribe of Iudah, euen that God, Peace, who ſhall ſhortly trample Satan vnder the feete of his Saints: Faint not yee therefore, becauſe of your continuall tentations. Thinke not the Lorde is from you, becauſe you are exerciſed with inward wreſtlings. Wreſtling in this life is our greateſt perfection, an vndoubted teſtimony of another life in vs, than the life of nature. None can ſtriue againſt Satan and ſinne, but by the Spirit of the Lord Ieſus: or who can hold, or retaine the Lord, till he bleſſe him, but he who hath the Spirite of the Lord Ieſus: Nature will make no oppoſition to Nature, and Satan wil not ſtriue againſt himſelfe: where ſtriuing and wreſtling is, ſtriuing (I meane) for a bleſsing from God, and wreſtling againſt ſinne, there Chriſt is, there the Spirit of the Lorde is, and there a new life is. By it thou arte knowne to bee the good ſouldier of Ieſus, to bee the man for whom

whom is prepared, the Crowne; *For no man is crowned, except he striue.* Let it be therefore no discouragement to thee, that thou art kept vnder, wrestling with daily tentations; but rather let it be to thee a witnesse, that God is with thee, as hee was with *Iacob.* Tim.

Farther, it is to be considered, that *Moses* saith, a Man wrestled with *Iacob*: so he appeared to be, but as ye haue heard, the wrestler was the Lord. This yeeldes a notable lesson for the children of God, that in all our wrestlings, what euer appeare vnto vs, or who euer seeme our partie, it is the Lord, with whome alway we haue to doe. This consideration vpheld *Iob*, that worthy warriour, in the middest of his greatest afflictions: when the tempest of wind ouerthrew the house, and destroyed his seauen sonnes, and three daughters: when fire came downe from heauen, and burnt his seauen thousand Iob.

In all our afflictions, we should goe by the instrumēt, & looke to god as our partie.

Iob

ſand ſheepe, and his ſeruants: when the *Sabeans* deſtroyed his fiue hundred yoke of oxen, and fiue hundred ſhee aſſes: when the three bandes of *Chaldeans*, tooke away his three thouſand Camelles: yet in all this he complaynes not of the iniquity of the *Caldeans*, and *Sabeans*: he murmures not againſt the elements, the aire, nor the fire: he ſpeakes no word againſt any that were inſtruments of his trouble: he knew that they were all vnder the Lords commandement, to come, and goe at his pleaſure, he turnes his eye toward the Lord, and takes him vp for his partie. *The Lord hath giuen, the Lord hath taken, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* And ſo with this one weapon of godly conſideration, he keeps at one time manifold buffets, and blowes of Satan, & is preſerued vnwounded by them: *For in all this* Iob *ſinned not with his mouth.*

Our impatience pro-

Good were it for vs, if in the whole

whole courſe of our life, wee could remember this: for ſo ſhould we not be diſcouraged, and caſt downe (as commonly wee are) by looking too much to the inſtruments of our trouble. Many things we beare the more impatiently, becauſe we conceit they proceede from men, or other ſecond cauſes, which wee would releaue much more willingly, if we could remember they come from God. Not ſo much *as a ſparrowe, nor a haire of our head falles to the ground, without the prouidence of our heauenly father:* Hee that keepes our hartes, will he not keepe our ſelfe? *Si ſic cuſtodiuntur ſuperflua tua, in quanta ſecuritate eſt anima tua?* If thy haires be ſo kept, in what ſafety is thy ſoule? What euer cup of trouble men prepare for vs, we ſhall not drinke of it, vnleſſe the Lord propine it, and temper it firſt with his owne hand. *Nabuchadnezzar* boaſted the three children with a fierie furnace,

ceedes of this, that wee looke to the inſtrument, more then to God.

Math. 6.

Au. hom. 14.

Dan.

nace, yet were they not afraid; and al becauſe they conſidered, that God aboue him ouer-ruled his intention.

Sam. Ruth. *Shimei* curſed *Dauid*, and he was not incenſed with anger, becauſe he conſidered that the Lord had ſent him. And *Naomi* with this comforted her ſelfe againſt the loſſe of her husband: *It is the Lord* (ſaid ſhe) *who humbles me.*

All theſe doe warne vs, whome God hath appointed for greater conflicts, that it is a great feeblenes, ariſing of inconſideration, to ſuffer our ſoules to be dimoued out of the ſtate of patience, by the inordinate behauiour of any outward inſtrument of our trouble. *Abſit à ſeruo Chriſti tale inquinamentum, vt patientia maioribus præparata in minoribus excidat.* Let ſuch a ſpot, and fowle blemiſh, be far from the ſeruants of Chriſt, that our patience, which is prepared for greater conflicts, ſhould faile, and fall away in ſmaller tentations. *If when we run with*

Tertul. lib. de patien.

Ier. 12. 5.

with foote-men they wearie vs, how ſhall we match our ſelues with horſes? If when we wreſtle with men, who are fleſh and bloud, we are ſo eaſilie ouerthrowne with euery breath of their mouth, & wounded with their ſmalleſt injuries, that we faint, & become impatient, how ſhal we *wreſtle againſt principalities and powers?* or how ſhall we reſiſt the fierie darts of the Diuel? We haue therefore for helpe of our weaknes, to gather our thoughts, and remember, that whoſoeuer bee the inſtrument of our trouble, it is the Lord, with whome we haue to doe, ſo ſhall we the more eaſilie poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, and giue glory to God. Rom. 8.

3 The third circũſtãce, manner of the wreſtling, corporall, ſpirituall, or mixt.

In the third roome we promiſed to ſpeake of the maner of this wreſtling, whether it be corporall only, or ſpirituall only, or mixed. Now that it is mixt, and ſo partly corporall, and partly ſpiritual, wil appeare, by

by comparing *Moſes*, and the Prophet *Hoſea* togither. That the wreſtling was corporall, it is cleare, of the disjoynting of *Iacobs* thigh, whereof *Moſes* makes mention: and that it was alſo ſpirituall, appeares, partlie of that, which *Moſes* ſaith, that *Iacob* ſtraue for the bleſsing, and partly of that which *Hoſea* ſaith, that he preuayled by wreſtling, and praying.

Hoſ. 12. 4.

Sore wreſtlings whē god at one time humbles his children both in bodie and minde.

These are the ſoreſt kind of wreſtlings, when the Lorde at one time exerciſes his children, both in body, and minde, that his heauie hand of ſicknelle, pouerty, or ſome ſuch like is vpon their bodies, and therewithal heauie inward troubles vpon their mindes. This is indeede a very hard eſtate: for as *Salomon* ſaith, *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtaine his infirmity, but a wounded ſpirit, who can beare it?* and yet with both thoſe at one time hath the Lord exerciſed his deareſt ſeruants, ſo hardly, that the vehemen-

Pro.

cie

cie of their trouble, hath forced them to powre out moſt lamentable complaints; *My hart* (ſaith *Dauid*) *is woũnded within me. My ſpirit is in perplexity, and my ſoule is amazed. The Lord renewes his plagues, & encreaſeth his wrath againſt me,* (ſaith *Iob*) *So that changes, and armies of ſorrowes are againſt me: the Lord ſuffers me not to take my breath, but filles me with bitterneſſe. The Lord* (ſaith *Nahomi*) *hath giuen me much bitternes. I haue fightings without, and terrours within,* ſaith the Apoſtle. It is a common diſeaſe of the children of God in their troubles, to thinke that their troubles are ſingular: I haue therefore marked this, that none of them ſhould thinke themſelues marowleſſe, when the Lord deales with them after this manner; *For no tentation hath ouertaken you, but that which appertaines to men.*

Pſ 109.22. Pſ.143.4. Iob.10.17. Iob. 9.8. 2.Cor.7.5. 1.Cor. 10.

We haue here in like manner to marke, an other kind of tentation, whereby

A rare tentation whē

Gods working seems to fight with his word and promise.

whereby God tries the faith of his children, which is, when his worke seemes directly to fight against his word: so that in working with his children, he apeareth to come against his promise. As for example, the Lord hath promised, that if I repent, he will forgiue; if I mourne for my sinnes, he will comfort me; if I aske from him, he will giue vnto me, so saies he in his word: Yet I find in his working with me, the contrary (will the troubled conscience of the child of God say) I doe repent from mine hart of my sinnes, and am sorrowful that euer I offended my God, but I cannot feele the remission of them: I mourne, but *the Comforter who should refresh my soule commeth not*. I call, and crie night and day, but the Lord heareth me not. Vnto this estate I know that oftentimes the dearest of Gods children, *as if the Lord had forgot to be mercifull vnto them, and shut vp his tender*

der

der mercies in diſpleaſure, they can finde no promiſed reſt to their ſoule, nor peace to their troubled mindes.

How wee ſhould behaue our ſelues in this tentation, wee are taught.

Thou therefore, whoſe hart is ſet to ſeeke the Lord, and in this perplexity wouldſt know what to doe, and how to behaue thy ſelfe, I can no better way reſolue thee, then to ſend thee to looke vnto *Abraham*, *Iacob*, *Iob*, and the reſt of theſe, who haue beene exerciſed with the like tentations before thee. Marke therefore, and conſider, how the Lord commanded *Iacob* to goe backe againe vnto *Canaan*, and promiſed to be with him; yet now in the journey (as it would ſeeme) he comes againſt him. He bade him goe forwarde, and yet disjoyntes his thigh bone, and ſo vnables him to goe, as he was wont. Notwithſtanding *Iacob* ſtill cleaues faſt to the promiſe of the Lorde, being perſwaded that the Lord could not faile him: and there-

fore, contrary to his preſent ſence and feeling, truſting ſtill on the word of the Lord, for all the appearing contrariety of his working, he craues a bleſsing from him, that wreſtles with him.

2 By Abraham.

Againe, will ye looke vnto *Abraham* our father? the Lord made him a promiſe, that in *Iſaac*, his ſeed ſhould be bleſſed, & yet he commands him to ſlay him. A wonderfull tentation, that the Lord commandes him to ſlay that child, in whome he had promiſed the multiplication, and bleſſing of his poſterity: for here the promiſe of God, and his commandement, ſeemes to fight togither. Yet *Abraham* ſtrengthned in the faith as he receaued *Iſaac* from the dead wombe of *Sarah*, doth not doubt but God was able to raiſe him from the dead againe; and therfore reſting on the Lords promiſe, he ſpares not to ſacrifice *Iſaac*, being fully aſſured, that

that the Lordes apparant contrarie working, could no way be prejudiciall to the verity of his worde. O ſtrong! O rare! O wonderfull faith! Therefore the Lord, who giueth no vaine ſtiles to his ſeruants, honoreth *Abraham* with this name, *The father of the faithfull*. For by his example, our weaknes is ſtrengthned, to giue credit to the Lord, when he ſpeaketh to vs.

And the ſame leſſon of faith, is in like manner taught vnto vs, by the example of patient *Iob* (for many ſchoole-maſters and examples haue we, on whome the ends of the world are fallen.) No doubt he had laid vp the promiſes of GOD in his hart, whereupon he dependeth: yet doth the Lord handle him ſo hardly, both in body and mind, as if he were determinate to keepe no promiſe vnto him. Yet *Iob* for all this, diſtruſts not the truth of Gods promiſe, but

3 By Iob.

gripes thē ſo ſurely, that in his greateſt extremity he reſolues, *O Lord, albeit thou ſhouldeſt ſlay me, yet will I truſt in thee*. That is, albeit Lorde, thou ſhouldeſt deale hardlier with mee, then thou haſt done, yet will I neuer thinke, but thou wilt be mercifull to me according to thy promiſe: there is a hart knitte to the Lord; there is a ſoule cleauing to God without ſeparation, that thus concludes. O Lord, none of thy workes ſhall make me to misbeleeue thy word: though thou caſt me downe to hell, my eye ſhall be vpward towards thee, & my ſoule ſhall loue thee, euen when it appeares thou ſaiſt that thou haſt no delight in me.

4 By the woman of Canaan.

And the like alſo may we ſee, in that woman of *Canaan*, according to that promiſe, *aske and it ſhall be giuen, call on me in thy trouble, and I ſhall heare thee, and deliuer thee*. She cries, *O Lord haue mercy on me*: but at the firſt gets

no

no anſwere. Shee cryeth againe, and againe, but contrary to an other promiſe, as it would appeare (*God giues to all men liberally, and reproches no man*) not only is ſhee refuſed, but reproched as a dogge, and one not meete to eate the childrens bread. But at the length, leaning without wauering to the Lordes promiſe, ſhee receaues a fauourable anſwere, *O woman, great is thy faith.*

Of all this then the leſſon ariſeth vnto vs, that when ere the Lord ſhall exerciſe vs ſo hardly, as to our judgement, Gods working in vs ſeemes to fight with his promiſe made vnto vs: ſo that ſuppoſe wee pray, and wee mourne, and we ſeeke comfort, wee can finde none: yea the more wee pray, the more our trouble encreaſeth; yet let vs not diſpaire, but learne at our brethren, who haue fought the like battailes before vs, to reſt aſſuredly on Gods promiſe. For in

Let vs euer leane to the worde of God, how ſtrange ſo euer his work ſeem vnto vs.

the end, his hardeſt working ſhall be found to tend vnto the performance of his promiſe made vs in Chriſt Ieſus: let the Lord walke on in his ſecret waies knowne to himſelfe, and let vs giue to the Lord this glory. *I know, O Lord, that it cannot be but well with them, who loues thee. I know O Lord that thy iudgements are right, for thy word endureth for euer in heauen, and thy truth is from generation to generation. Heauen and earth ſhall paſſe away, but one iotte of the word of God, ſhall not paſſe vnfulfilled.*

Pſ. 119. 75. verſ. 89.

O happy are they to whom the Lord hath made a promiſe of mercy! they ſhall ſing in the end with *Ezechiel*: *The Lord hath ſaid it, and the Lord hath done it: he will ſtabliſh the promiſe he hath made to his ſeruant, and he will not alter the word that he hath ſpoken with his lips.*

Eſa. 38. 15. Pſ. 119. 38. Pſ. 89. 33.

Wherefore, O thou that art afflicted, & humbled in ſpirit, diſquieted within thy ſelfe, *waite vpon God, and thou ſhalt yet giue him thankes.*

Now

Now in the fourth roome, we haue to ſpeake of the time, how long this wreſtling continueth. *Moſes* ſaith it laſted, *to the breaking of the day*. Here then is a new mercy to be marked; the Lord will neuer ſo exerciſe his children with wreſtlings, but for regard of their weaknes, graunts them ſome intermiſsion, and a breathing time, leſt they ſhould faint: he will lay no more vpon them, then they are able to beare, neyther ſuffer his rods to lie longer vpon their backes, then may ſerue for their weale. All our afflictions are meaſured by the Lord, in quantity, quality, and continuance of time. For quantity, the Lord propines to each one of his children, a cuppe of affliction conuenient for their purgation: and as to quality, he tempers alſo our afflictions, that where of their owne nature, they are exceeding bitter, being the fruites of ſin, worſe to drinke

4 The forth circũſtãce, how long endureth the wreſtling.

1. Cor. 10. 13.

Our afflictions are meaſured in quantity, quality and time.

then the waters of *Marah*, vntil *Moſes* changed them by prayer, & made them ſweete. He alters them in like manner, by the vertue of the Croſſe of Chriſt, and his interceſsion for vs, they become ſo ſweete and delectable, that wee rejoyce in tribulation. And as for time, he giues vs but daies of triall, and affliction; houres of tentation, attending to his good pleaſure, and wiſht diſpenſation. If hee caſt *Shadra*, *Meſah*, and *Abednego* into the fire, one like the ſon of God ſhal goe with them, to wait vpon them, and relieue them in conuenient time. Yea, no gold-ſmith waſtes ſo diligently on his gold, to take it out of the fire in due time, as the Lord attendes vpon his children, that in due ſeaſon he may draw them out of their troubles. Iacob wreſtles no longer then the dawning, and all our troubles haue an appointed time of deliuerance. *Weeping may abide in the euening, but ioy commeth in the morning.*

Pſal.

And of this ariſeth to vs, a leſſon of patience, that ſo long as it pleaſed the Lord to exerciſe vs with any croſſe, ſo long ſhould we be content to beare it. No minting to caſt off the yoke, vntill it pleaſe the Lorde to take it from our necke. *Noah* was weary of his abiding in the Arke a yeare and a day (for ſo long hee remained) and no doubt, when he ſaw the ground, he was greatly deſirous to come foorth: but he will haue no deliuerance, till the Lord, who cloſed him in, commaund him alſo to come out; and in very trueth, there can be no deliuerãce but that which commeth from the Lord, as this one notable example among moe makes manifeſt vnto vs. When the Angell commaunded *Lot* to eſcape for his life to the mountaine, he requeſted the Angell for licence to tarry at *Zoar*. And ſo, where the Lord pointed out the mountaine for the place of his

This ſhuld teach vs patience in trouble for there is no deliuerãce till God giue it.

his deliuerance, hee himselfe makes choise of another; but when he obtained that which hee desired, durst he for all that abide in *Zoar?* No certainly, hee could neuer liue without, vntill he went forward to the mountaine, whereunto the Angell at the first directed him. So that both the time, and the place, and the manner of our deliuerance must be referred to the Lord, and not elected by our selues. Then wee rest in quietnesse, when we rest on the will and mercie of God, not vpon our owne deceitfull refuges of vanitie.

How foolish are the wicked, who seeke deliuerãce by other meanes.

And heere is discouered the foolishnesse of the wicked, who being impatient of trouble, haue recourse with *Achaziah* to *Beelzebub*, to Satan or his instruments, seeking by sorcery, charming, or some other such vnlawfull meanes to preuent the Lords deliuerance. Alas, these blind wretches see not, that which after this

this manner they ſeeke to reade them ſelues, they fall vnder the danger of an euerlaſting wrath. When *Hananiah* that falſe prophet brake that yoke of timber, which the Lord put about the necke of *Ieremie*, to preſignifie the captiuity of *Babel*, the Lord in ſteede of it, put a yoke of yron about his necke, which *Hananiah* was not able to breake. So ſhall it be with thee: O thou, who withdraweſt thy ſelfe from thy Lorde; thou who wilt caſt off the yoke of God, and not tarry till the Lord deliuer thee. In ſteede of a yoke of wood, the Lord ſhall faſten thy necke with a yoke of yron, that is, in ſteede of a light temporall affliction, whereof thou haſt freed thy ſelfe for a time, by meanes vnlawfull, *The Lorde ſhall ſting thee with Serpents, and Cockatrices, which thou ſhalt not be able to charme: he ſhall caſt thee in that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone*, and ſhall bind Iere. 28. 13

vpon

vppon thee for euer that terrible wrath, which is *A wrath to come*, except in time thou repent.

We ſhould pray to the Lorde in trouble, but not prevent him.

But, leauing the wicked, lette vs learne at *Iacob*, who with patience continues in the wreſtling, as long as the Lorde will wreſtle with him, ſo that, as the Lord beganne it, ſo is he the firſt that breaketh it off. Wee may indeede, with a good warrant, pray for deliuerance out of trouble, ſaying with Chriſt our Lord; *If it be thy will, Lord let this cup paſſe by mee*; but alwayes ſo, that wee ſubmit our will to the Lordes moſt holie will; *Neuertheleſſe, not as I will, but as thou wilt*. And in the meane ſeaſon, ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe the Lorde to keepe vs vnder affliction, let vs beware that we murmure not, *neyther limitate the holie one of Iſrael*, to preſcribe vnto him, eyther the time, or manner of our deliuerance. Reſerue to the Lord his owne praiſe; *Hee is*

Pſal. 68. 20

the

the God that ſaueth vs, and vnto the Lord belongeth the iſſues of death: Waite thou patiently on the Lord: Committe thy way to him, truſt in him, and hee ſhall bring it to paſſe. Pſal. 37. 5

Verſe 25. *And when he ſawe that he could not preuaile.*

THe fifth thing we promiſed to ſpeake of, is the euent, and iſſue of the wreſtling; where wee ſee that the wreſtling is ſo diſpenſed by God, that in the end, the victory inclines vnto *Iacob*. So ſaieth *Moſes* heere: *The Lord ſawe that he could not preuaile.* This ſpeech dooth not import any ſuperiour ſtrength in *Iacob*, but an aboundant mercie in GOD. The Lords *cannot, is no other thing, but, he will not:* he that is the *God of heauen and earth*; he *that ſpeaketh, and it commeth to paſſe: all the nations of the earth compared with him, are but as the droppe* Eſay 40.

5 The fifth circúſtãce the event of the wreſtling.

of

of a bucket: if he had pleaſed to haue taken from *Iacob* his breath out of his noſthriiles, he might eaſily haue confounded him, and layd him dead vnto the ground. But it pleaſes him by ſecret ſtrength to make *Iacob* victorious; yet not ſo, but that he carrieth away ſome marke of his weakneſſe, and infirmitie: For the Lorde disjoynts his thigh bone, and maketh him to halt, and that partly for *Iacobs* humiliation, leſt hee ſhoulde impute the victory vnto his owne ſtrength, rather than the Lords mercie; and partly, that it might be a memoriall vnto him all the dayes of his life, and prouocation to thankefulnes. As alſo the Lord gaue him this marke in his body, as *Theodoret* thinketh, to aſſure him, that it was no fantaſie, nor vaine viſion, which had appeared vnto him.

In our ſpiritual battelles wee

And in this is ſhadowed vnto vs, the manner of that victory, which the

the children of God obtaine in their wreſtlings, to wit, that it is ſuch a victory as is not without a wound. A notable wreſtler was *Dauid*, yet got hee ſundry times the foyle. A notable wreſtler was *Peter*, and ſuch a one for whome Chriſt prayed, that his faith ſhould not faile, becauſe he knew that Satan was to ſift him: yet was hee deadly wounded by a very weake inſtrument. A notable wreſtler alſo was the Apoſtle *Paul*: many rare reuelations receiued hee of the Lord; much did hee in his calling, to drawe many to righteouſneſſe; he laboured more aboundantly than all the reſt of the Apoſtles: he ſounded powerfully that trumpet, which caſt downe the walls of ſpirituall *Iericho* whereſoere he came: ſo that from *Ieruſalem* to *Illyricum* he made the Goſpel of Chriſt to abound. Yet, leſt he ſhould be exalted out of meaſure, an Angell of Sathan was ſent to buffet him.

gette no victorie without a wound.

him. *Noah* that preacher of righteousnesse to the originall world, spotted with drunkennesse. So *Moses* speaketh of him, though *Basill* excuse his fact, that in respect hee was the first planter of a vineyard, his drunkennes came rather of the lacke of experience, that he knew not the strength of wine, than of his intemperance. Yet the Spirit of God marketh it in him as a blemish. No victory then to the children of God in their battels in this life, without some wound. Who can say, he hath so fought against sinne, that at no time he hath bin ouercome of sinne? The best he that euer liued in the worlde (our blessed Sauiour excepted) hee hath had his *breuia, leniaq; peccata, quamuis pauca, quamuis parua, non tamen nulla:* And those sinnes, as they were done by them, so are they written for vs, not for our imitation, but for attention: not that wee shoulde make

Basil. ser. 2. de Ieiun.

make ſport of their weakeneſſe, as *Cham* did of his fathers nakedneſſe, *Qui lapſu alieno gaudet, gaudet diaboli victoria*. Hee that rejoyceth at an other mans fall, rejoyceth at Sathans victory: but rather, *Vt medicamenta nobis de alienis vulneribus faciamus*, that ſo knowing our owne weakeneſſe, wee may learne by their example to take heede to our ſelues.

Verſe 26. *And hee ſaide: Let mee goe.*

Second part of the Hiſtorie containing the conference between Iacob, and the Angel.

HAuing ſpoken of the wreſtling, that was between the Lord, and *Iacob*, it now remaines we ſpeake of the conference; that vpon the wreſtling fell out betweene them.

The Lorde beginneth the conference, and he craues of *Iacob*, that he would let him goe. This may ſeeme very ſtrange, that the Lorde this manner of way ſhoulde ſpeake vnto

his ſeruant, he that looſed the coupling of *Iacobs* thigh, might hee not haue looſed the gaps of *Iacobs* hand? hee that came to *Iacob*, without *Iacobs* knowledge, might hee not haue gone without *Iacobs* licence? Hee might indeede: yet doeth hee make intimation of his departure vnto *Iacob*, and why? onely to ſtirre him vp the more earneſtly to ſeeke his bleſſing before he go. This is the Lords maner of dealing with his children, that hee makes the mintes of his departure from them, to be means, that prouokes them to draw neerer vnto him, ſo that ſpirituall deſertions, are as prouocations, whereby God his children are wakened more effectuouſly to deſire the continuaunce of Gods mercy with them. When Ieſus Chriſt, accompanied his two diſciples vnto *Emaus*, and communed with them by the way, when they drew neere to the towne, Ieſus made him

Threatnings of ſpirituall diſertions are prouocations of the godly to drawe neere vnto the Lord.

Luk. 24. 28

him (ſayeth the Euangeliſt) as if hee would haue gone alittle further, only to ſtirre them, to ſeeke his abiding with them. In the doing of our Sauiours, is figured vnto vs the maner of the Lords working with his children, who ſometimes dooth ſo behaue himſelfe, as if he were inſtantly to depart, and take his holy Spirite from them; which mintes of ſpirituall deſertion, becauſe they are exceeding grieuous to the godly, lette vs for our comfort conſider, the Lord, by them, ſeeketh no other thing, but to encreaſe our faith, to kindle our loue, to ſtirre vs vp vnto greater feruencie in prayer, that wee may with *Iacob*, conſtraine the Lorde to tarry and bleſſe vs. And with the two diſciples may cry, Lord, abide with vs, and forſake vs not. For wee are to vnderſtand, that the ſame bleſsings which God hath concluded to beſtow vpon his children, he wil haue vs

The Lord will haue vs to praie for theſe ſame bleſſings that hee hath concluded to giue.

vs to aske them, before that he giue them: the Lord came at this time to *Iacob*, of purpoſe to bleſſe him, and yet hee makes as if hee would goe away, and not bleſſe him; not that he had changed his minde, but becauſe hee will haue *Iacob* to pray for that bleſsing of corroboration, which he had concluded to giue him. And let this warne vs in the leaſt threatning of a ſpirituall deſertion, to lay holde on the Lord by prayer, leſt for fault of ſeeking, wee cloſe vp the Lordes handes, which are full of bleſsings, ready to be beſtowed vpon vs.

The Lords preſence is not injoyd without intermiſſion in this life.

Agayne, wee are to conſider, that the Lordes preſence in a like maner, can not bee continually kept in this life: neither from the beginning haue any of the children of God enjoyed it at all times. Where, for the better vnderſtanding of the leſſon, and our farther comfort, we muſt diſtinguiſh betweene theſe twoo kindes of the Lordes

Lords preſence; there is a preſence of the Lorde, which is felt and perceiued; there is an other, which is ſecret, and not perceiued, yet knowne by the effects. The ſecret preſence of God, is continually with his children where-euer they goe, ruling, guiding, and ſuſtaining them in all their troubles, according to his promiſe, *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, that they doe not ouerflowe thee: when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt.* As to vs wee haue our owne viciſsitudes of feeling, and not feeling; we are changeable, but the Lorde remaineth the ſame; whom hee loues, he loueth to the end, *Hee will neuer leaue vs, nor forſake vs*: But by his ſecret preſence, hee intertaines life in our ſoules, when to our owne iudgement, wee are become altogether dead, and ſenſleſſe, as there is *a ſubſtance in the Elme and Oake, euen when*

Two ſorts of the lord his preſẽce one ſecret, which we want neuer, an other felt, which alwaies wee enioy not. Eſa. 43.3.

Eſa. 6.

they haue caſt their leaues. And this as I ſaide, appeareth by the effects, that we haue ſtoode in many tentations, wherein wee coulde feele no preſent grace vpholding vs.

What notable effectes the felt preſence of God bringeth with it.

The other ſort is, when not onely God is preſent with his children, but alſo make themſelues ſenſibly perceiue it, by inward and glorious feelings: this preſence when we get it, makes a ſodaine change of the whole man, it raiſes vs from death to life, it maketh a comfortable light to ſhine where fearefull darkeneſſe abounded, it makes our faith liuely, our loue feruent, our zeale burning, our prayer earneſt. Then is our water turned into wine, our ſighs are turned into ſongs, & our mourning into glorious rejoycing, becauſe the *Bridegroome is with vs*, *and the Comforter that doth refreſh our ſoule*, is come to viſite vs. This preſence is as euidently felt of them to whome it is graun-

graunted; as was that deſcending of the Holy-ghoſt perceiued of the Apoſtles, to whom he came.

This preſence ſometime is graunted before trouble, as heere vnto *Iacob*, & then it is a preparation of him that gettes it, to the battell it emboldens, incorages, and ſtrengthens him in ſuch ſort, that he feares not in gods cauſe, to encounter with whatſoeuer aduerſary. He triumphs with *Dauid*; *The Lord is the light of my ſaluation, whom ſhal I feare? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?* This preſence makes *Iacob* with his familie goe forward in the face of *Eſau*, and of his armed men without feare, where before hee was afraide at the rumour of his comming. This preſence made *Moſes* lightly regarde the angry countenaunce of *Pharaoh*, *becauſe he had ſeene him, who was inuiſible.* This preſence made *Paul* goe vppe with joy to *Ieruſalem*, where he knew

This felt preſence before trouble is as a preparatiue.

Pſal. 27. 1

he ſhould be in chaines for the name of Ieſus. This preſence hath emboldned many faithfull Martyres, to offer their bodies more freely, and willingly to the fire, for the teſtimonie of Ieſus, than euer any worldeling hath ſtept into his bath to waſh himſelfe, or to his bedde to reſt him. Let *Peter* be prepared with this preſence, and hee will preach Chriſt boldly in the face of a Councell that condemned Chriſt: let *Peter* want this preſence, and he wil deny Chriſt at the voyce of a ſimple damſell.

And after trouble it is to Gods children a reſtoratiue.

Sometime againe, this preſence is graunted to his children, after their long continuance in ſome trouble, & then it is to them as the neeſings of that child, whome after ſowning, *Eliſha* reduced vnto life: or as blinkes of the bright ſhining Sunne, to the tender fruites of the earth, which before hath beene oppreſſed with blaſting, and conſuming tempeſts: it brings

bringes to the children of God, a pacifying of all theſe diſtruſtfull perturbations, which did before diſquiet them: yea it ſo delights and rauiſhes them, that with the three Diſciples on Mount *Tabor*, when they had ſeene a little glaunce of Chriſtes glory, they crie out, *It is good for vs to be here*. Yea they wiſh, oh that my ſoule might for euer abide in this happy ſtate and condition! But as I ſaid before, to enjoy the Lord continually in this manner, is not giuen to any man vpon earth, for a while hee will be familiar with thee, as he was with *Iacob*; but ſoone after, he muſt goe, & thou muſt learne to reuerence this diſpenſation of his preſence, and not to be diſcouraged, becauſe for a while hee is gone from thee: yea albeit with *Mary*, *one ſword* (of many ſorrowes) *ſhould pierce through thy ſoule*, yet with her alſo, *magnifie the Lord, & let thy ſpirit reioyce in God thy Sauiour*, bleſsing Mat. 17.4.

bleſsing him with hart and mouth, *that he looked to the baſe eſtate of his ſeruant*. Account thy ſelfe happy, that at any time the Lord ſhewes thee his mercifull face, being aſſured, that he who hath giuen thee an earneſt pennie, will in his owne good time, giue thee the principall ſumme, and that the blinkes of mercy which thou haſt gotten, are pledges of a fill of mercy, which yet abides thee. For ſo *Dauid* of that which he had felt concludeth, *doubtleſſe, kindnes and mercy ſhall follow me all the dayes of my life.*

The preſence, or abſence of God, is euer diſpenſed for the weale of his owne children.

For the morning appeareth. Theſe wordes containe the reaſon, why the Lord deſires that *Iacob* ſhould let him goe, becauſe the morning appeareth. This at the firſt ſeemes a ſtrange reaſon. Is it not alike to thee O Lord to abide with thy ſeruantes in the morning, as in the euening? or is there O Lord with thee any ſuch diſtinction of time? Surely none at all.

al. *For thou O Lord art couered with the light, as with a garment*, euen the darkneſſe with thee is light; yea, thoſe bright Angelles, that ſtande about thy throne, makes the mid-night, where they come, for ſhining light, like the noone-tide of the day. But we muſt conſider, that this reaſon reſpecteth not the Lord, it reſpecteth *Iacob*, and ſo the meaning is. It is for thy cauſe O my ſeruant *Iacob*, that I deſire to goe, for now the morning appeareth, and thou muſt goe on in thy journey, thy ſeruantes, and family will wait for thy comming, as being vncertaine, whether they ſhall remoue, or remaine, till thou direct them, & therefore that I be no more to ſtay thee from them, let me goe. Pſ. 104. 2.

And of this wee may more euidently perceaue, that which I ſaid, how the going and comming of the Lord, to, and fro his children, is alway ordayned, and diſpenſed for their

It is granted for our conſolation, & taken away for our humiliation.

their weale; when he commeth, when he goeth, all is for our weale. *Ne timeas ô Sponsa, nec existimes te contemni, si paulisper tibi sponsus subtrahit faciem suam: omnia ista tibi cooperantur in bonum, de accessu, & recessu lucraris.* Be not afraid (saith *Bernard*) O Spouse, neither thinke that thou art contemned, albeit for a short while the bridegrome withdrawe his face, all that he doth, workes for the best vnto thee: thou hast gaine, both of his comming to thee, and of his going from thee. And this for the comfort of one exercised with spirituall desertion, doth hee explaine more clearely in the wordes which he immediately subjoynes, *Tibi venit, & recedit, venit ad consolationem, recedit ad cautelam, ne magnitudo consolationis extollat te, ne si semper adesset, exilium deputares pro patria, & arrham pro vrbis summa, paulisper permittit nos gustare, quam suauis sit, & antequam plane sentiamus se subtrahit, & ita quasi alis expansis te prouocat ad vo-*

Ber.

Lanaum. He commeth (ſaith hee) for thy conſolation, & goes for thy warning & humiliation, leſt the greatnes of his comfort, ſhuld puffe thee vp, & leſt if he were alwaies preſent, thou ſhouldſt eſteeme this place of thy baniſhment for thine owne countrie, & ſhould take his earneſt for the principall ſumme, he lets thee taſte of his ſweetnes for a ſhort while. and incõtinent before thou feele it fullie, hee withdrawes himſelfe; and ſo, as it were, with his winges ſtreatched out ouer thee, he prouokes thee to mount vp, and flie after him.

This is the reaſon, why the Lord diſpenſes in ſuch ſort his preſence, & abſence vnto his children. If at no time he ſhewes himſelfe vnto vs, then would we be ouercome, *of that heauines vnder which we lie through manifold tentations:* and if alwaies he ſhould be familiar with vs, then would we take the earth for the heauen, and forget our

our fathers houſe, which is aboue; therefore ſometime hee withdrawes his preſence from vs, that he may teach vs to become weary of this barren wildernes, wherein we liue abſent from our Lord. Hee aſcendes many times frō vs, that we may ſtand like theſe Diſciples on the mount of Oliuet, not looking downeward to the earth, but gazing, and looking vpward towardes our Lord, who hath gone from vs; he giues vs a litle taſte of his gratiouſnes, and then he goes, but goeth in ſuch ſort, that he cries after him, *Come and ſee*. Not of purpoſe to defraud thee of any joy that is in him doth he goe from thee, only that he may prepare thee to follow him to that place, wherein he wil communicate to thee, *the fulnes of ioy*, and let thee ſee that glory, *he had with his father from the beginning*. Hee will not alway tarrie from vs, leſt we deſpaire, neyther yet alway remaine with

Spirituall deſertions are prouocations of vs to followe the Lord.

with vs on earth, leſt wee preſume. Sometime hee will kiſſe vs with the kiſſes of his mouth, and as it were with the Apoſtle, *raviſh vs vp to the third heauens:* other times againe, as it ſeemes, he caſts downe his angrie countenance vpon vs, he humbles vs to the hell, and permits *Satan alſo to buffet vs, leſt we ſhould be exalted out of meaſure*. Alwaies this comfort wee haue of all the Lords working with vs, that as here we ſee he comes to *Iacob*, & goes from him for his weale: ſo, whether he ſhew himſelfe familiar with vs, or againe, for a while hide his face from vs, in both the one, and the other, he is working for our comfort and weale. Only *let vs poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience*, and giue glory to God.

Who anſwered, I will not let thee goe. Perceaue here, how the mint of the Lordes departure workes into *Iacob* a more conſtant cleauing, and adhering

How their inward exerciſes of cõſcience, workes in

the godly a diuorcement of their ſouls from all creatures, and a neerer adherent to the Lord.

ring to the Lord. This, as I ſaid before, is that notable fruit which all the Lords ſpiritual deſertions worketh in his children; it augments in them, a deſire of mercy, and a more earneſt carefulnes to ſeeke the Lord. And this alſo we ſee in our daylie experience: for among all them, who profeſſe the name of Ieſus Chriſt, ye ſhal find none more feruent in prayer, more continuall in mourning and ſighing for their ſinnes, none that thirſteth more earneſtly for mercie, then they, whom God hath humbled in their ſpirits, with threatninges of ſpirituall deſertion. As here *Iacob* is more wakened by this one woord, *Let me goe*, then by all the reſt of the wreſtling, ſo is there nothing goeth ſo neere the hart of the godly, as doth the mint of the Lordes departure from them; they are neuer ſo louing to him, as at thoſe times, when hee ſeemeth to count leaſt of them: if

if he looke angerlie vpon them, the more pitifully looke they vnto him: if he threaten them, they threaten kindnes vpon him: the hardlier that he anſweres them, the more importunately doe they crie vpon him. Then with *Dauid they water their couch with teares, and call vpon God all the day long. Their eyes caſt out water continually, whē the Comforter that ſhould refreſh their ſoules, is away from them.* Lam. 1. 14.

In a word, theſe deſertions worke in Gods children, a diuorcement of their ſoules from the delight of euery creature, and a ſtraiter adherence to himſelfe: when he threatens to goe from them, they followe him with theſe lamentable voyces: *Turne againe O Lord, and cauſe thy face to ſhine vpon me, that I may be ſaued.* O Lord, take from me what thou wilt, take from me all the worldly comforts, that euer thou gaueſt me; only let me enjoy thy ſelfe; *for whome haue I*

in the heauens but thee? and I haue deſired none in the earth with thee; my fleſh failes me, and my hart alſo. Lord faile thou me neuer: when thou hideſt thy face, I am ſore troubled, returne therefore O Lord, and be mercifull to me, be thou the ſtrength of my hart, and my portion for euer: for thy louing kindnes is better then life. Theſe are the effects of ſanctified trouble, while I haue marked, that we may be comforted, and not diſcouraged: when we finde that our outwarde, or inward troubles produce into vs a loathing of earthly pleaſure, and a more feruent loue of our God.

There is a ſtriuing with God acceptable to him, & namely, when wee will take no refuſall of that that God hath promiſed.

We haue yet more narrowlie to conſider this anſwere, that *Iacob* giues to the Lord: *I will not* (ſaith he) *let thee goe*. Is this a ſeemely anſwere for a ſeruant to giue vnto his Lord? when the Lord ſaies, let me goe, becomes it *Iacob* to anſwere, I will not let thee goe? Is this good religion, in any thing to ſtriue with the Lorde?

Yea

Yea indeede: There are ſome things, wherein the Lord is very well content that thou ſtriue with him; as namely, when the Lord hath promiſed any thing vnto thee, & thou haſt his word for thy warrant, to ſeeke it in ſort, that albeit the Lord ſay thee nay, yet thou wilt receaue no refuſall at his hands: this is a ſtrife, which pleaſeth the Lord, for in effect it is no other thing, but a conſtant affirmation, that his truth is inuiolable. After this manner, that woman of *Canaan* ſtroue with him, ſhe would take no deniall of that which he had promiſed: and after this manner, here alſo *Iacob* ſtriues with him, he will not be denied of a bleſsing. And *Moſes* alſo ſtroue with the Lord, proteſting he would not go forward one foote, vnleſſe the Lord went with him; becauſe the Lord had ſo promiſed. But farre be it from vs to ſtriue with the Lord, as the wicked doe, grieuing

him daylie, with our murmuringes, and rebellions, ſtill liuing in contrary tearmes with the Lord. *Woe bee to him, that ſtriueth with his Maker, doe yee prouoke the Lord vnto anger? or are yee ſtronger then he?* The end of this ſtrife to them will be horrible confuſion.

Eſay 46.9.

There is yet farther to be conſidered in theſe wordes of *Iacob*, how he ſaith to the Lord, *I will not let thee goe*; by what meane is this, that *Iacob* is able to hold, and detaine the Lord? The Prophet *Hoſea* will reſolue this: It was (ſaith he) by mourning, and weeping that *Iacob* preuayled, and held the Angell, whilſt he gotte the bleſsing. There is nothing ſo ſtrong in the worlde, as the prayers of the godly, they are the only bandes, by which the Lord is holden, and detayned: the Lorde will not bee reſtrayned by all the powers of the earth, neyther will he ceaſe to doe any worke, that he is about to doe, for the

Nothing i the world ſo ſtrong as the prayer of the godly, for they are the bands whereby the Lord is holden and detained.

the cries of all the men in the world: yet the prayers of his children are able to conſtraine him, to powre down an vndeſerued bleſsing, and turne away a juſt deſerued puniſhment. When the people of *Iſrael* had fallen from God by worſhipping the golden Calfe, the Lordes anger was highly incenſed, and kindled againſt them, which moued *Moſes* to fall downe on his face before the Lord, beſeeching him to be appeaſed towardes his people for the glorie of his name. This prayer did in ſuch ſort conſtraine the Lord in the middeſt of his anger, that he is compelled to ſay vnto *Moſes*, *Let mee alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, for I will conſume them*. This manner of ſpeech vſed by the Lord, declares that the prayer of *Moſes* did bind, & holde in the wrath of GOD, that it brake not out vpon this people. In like manner we reade in the Goſpell,

that when Ieſus was paſsing by theſe two blinde men, who cryed vpon him, *Oſanna, thou ſonne of* Dauid *haue mercy vpon vs:* albeit the multitude regarded not their crying, and the Diſciples alſo (as it ſeemes) tooke little thought thereof; yet Ieſus was moued thereby to ſtand ſtill. They could not come neere him for the multitude, to lay handes on him, but their prayers reached vnto him, and doth ſo take holde vppon him, that by that place he could not goe, vntil he had giuen them a comfortable anſwere, *The prayer of a righteous man auailes much, if it be powred out in faith.*

Iam.

Prayers of the godly muſt be forcible and acceptable to God, ſeeing they come from his owne Spirite.

This then is to the great comfort of the godly, that our prayers are effectuall, and are (as I may call them) the Lords owne bandes, wherewith we are able to detaine and hold him, till he bleſſe vs. And no meruaile, ſeing theſe prayers are not ours, but the interceſsion of Gods owne ſpirit in

in vs, powred out in the name of Chriſt, in whome he is ay well pleaſed. For as to vs *we knowe not what to pray as we ought, but the ſpirite it ſelfe makes requeſt for vs, with ſighes, which cannot bee expreſſed.* And therefore may we boldly thinke, that the Lord will not deſpiſe them. *Spiritus eſt in quo clamamus, Abba pater: ſicut in nobis interpellat pro nobis, ita in patre delicta, donat pro ipſo patre, quod poſtulamus, idem ipſe donat, qui dat vt poſtulemus.* It is the ſpirit, (ſaith *Bernard*) by whom we cry Abba father: as in vs the ſpirit makes requeſt for vs: ſo with the Father he graunts our requeſtes, and forgiues vs our ſinnes; that for which we pray, euen hee giueth it vnto vs, who giueth vs this grace to pray. Let vs therefore pray continually, and ſtrengthen by theſe godly meditations our feeble hartes, and weake handes, that they faint not in prayer. Let vs goe and deſire good things

Rom. 8.

Ber. in feſto Pent. ſer. 1.

from the Lorde, ſeing wee haue the Lorde bound to vs by his promiſe. *The Lord will fulfil the deſire of them, who feare him.* And againe, *That which the wicked feares, ſhall come vpon him, but God will graunt the deſire of the righteous.* Thou who art made ſure to obtaine, if ſo be thou canſt deſire, art here made inexcuſable: none wants mercy and grace, but he who deſires it not.

Pſal. Pro. 10.24

A warning for attention in prayer. *Chryſoſt. de Canan. homil. 15.*

And yet take heede, that in thy prayer thou be not vnreuerent, remember, *à quo, & quam magna petas*: from whome, and what great things thou craueſt. Great thinges, from a great King, ſhould be deſired with reuerence, and affection: they can beſt ſpeede at the Lordes almes-dealing, that fall downe loweſt with the Publicã, not they who with the Phariſie ſtand vp prowdeſt vpon their feete. *Abraham*, the father of the faithfull, in his prayer, conſidering

in

in himſelfe, and looking to the maieſtie of God, humbly confeſſeth, that he was but duſt and aſhes. Yea *Adam* in his beſt eſtate of his innocencie, was bound to glorifie God, with the like confeſsion of the baſenes of his originall, and to let *Adam* alone. The heauens are not cleane in his ſight, yea he hath found follie in his Angels, they couer, not only their feete, but their faces before the Lord: what then ſhalt thou doe O man, who dwelleſt in lodginges of clay? A ſinfull creature by thine owne apoſtaſie, loaden with iniquity: how ſhouldeſt thou be humbled, and bow downe thy ſoule, in preſence of thy *Maker, Redeemer, and thy Iudge?*

Preſumption in prayer thus being remoued, I returne to the comfort. Thou being thus humbled with an hatred of thine owne ſins, with feare and reuerence of that diuine majeſty, *truſting to his promiſe, goe on with boldnes*

We ſhuld not deſpiſe our owne prayers, they being powred out with-

out preſumption, and why?

to the throne of grace. Noli vilipendere orationem tuam, quoniam ille, ad quem oras, non vilipendit: lightly not thine owne prayer, as though it were a ſmall thing, ſeing the Lord to whom thou prayeſt hath declared, that he accounts ſo much of it, ſuppoſe it be weake, yet remember, *Etiam ſolis vagitibus infans matrem commouet ad miſericordiam:* euen the very cries of the infant that vtters no diſtinct voice, moues the mother vnto commiſeration. And what compariſon betweene the loue of a mother toward her children, & the loue of the Lord towards his? No father *will giue to his children that asketh, a ſtone in ſteede of bread, nor a ſerpent in ſteede of a fiſh:* What kindnes then (if we craue it) may we looke for at the handes of our heauenly father? *As the heauens are aboue the earth, ſo are my thoughts aboue yours.* Our prayers (ſaith *Cyprian*) are *arma cœleſtia quæ ſtare nos faciunt,*

Macar. homil. 31.

Cypr. lib. 1. epiſt. 1.

ciunt, & fortiter perſeuerare, hæc ſunt munimenta ſpiritu alia & tela diuina. They are ſpirituall armour, whereby we ſtand, and ſtrongly perſeuer to the end, they are heauenly darts and defences.

A commendatiō of prayer.

Oh that wee vnderſtoode the excellencie of this grace of prayer, that ſo we might the more delight in it! it is the hand of a chriſtian, which is able to reach from earth to heauen, and take forth euerie maner of good gift out of the Lordes treaſure. It is one of thoſe keyes of the houſe of *Dauid*, whereby we open the doores of the heauenly pallace, and goe in to take a view of that eternall building, and glorious manſion prepared for vs in heauen. It is the meſſenger that with ſpeede goeth from our ſoules, ſaluting no creature by the way, and entreth ſtrait into the Mercie ſeate in heauen, reporting to the Lord all our deſires, and returning

ning backe, a fauourable anſwere for him. Yea, it is vnto vs, as that fiery chariot of *Eliah*, whereunto we mount vp, and haue our conuerſation with God in the heauens. O happie ſoule therefore, which God hath endewed with this moſt heauenlie grace!

Iacobs feruency and zeale in prayer convinces our inconſideration and coldneſſe.

Except thou bleſſe me.] It were for vs a good thing, if wee could learne from *Iacob* this holy wilfulnes, neuer to let the Lord alone til he bleſſe vs. But alas, heere are wee taken in our ſinne, wee fall to our prayers without preparation; wee powre out a number of words without deuotion, and ſo goe away without a bleſsing. Wee ſend out our prayers like to incenſe, made indeed according to the Lordes direction, but not kindled with fire from the Altar; that is, petitions lawfull enough, and agreeable to Gods word, but not powred out in feruencie. And ſo no maruell, that

that the Lorde ſmell not in them a ſweete ſacrifice; for incenſe without fire hath no fragrant ſmell; and ſo hauing finiſhed our colde prayers, wee riſe without examination, not once conſidering with what fruit we haue prayed; and whether we haue gotten a bleſsing from God, or no.

Iacob can not end til God haue bleſſed him.

Godly *Iacob* will here teach vs an other leſſon, that we ſhould not let our gripes goe, nor ceaſe from crying, vntill the Lord haue bleſſed vs. Then hath *Iacob* doone, whenas the Lord hath bleſſed him: but till hee get the bleſsing, *Iacob* in no wiſe wil part with the Lord. Where, if thou diſpaire, how ſhalt thou knowe in praier when God bleſſeth thee? I anſwer: Except the Lord teach thee, I can not tell thee: the Spirite of God, when hee comes downe with a bleſſing, makes himſelfe to be knowne. No man hath felt ſo ſenſible a ſhower of raine deſcending on his bodie, as

How may we knowe when God bleſſeth vs in praying to him?

as the childe of God will feele, when the ſhowre of grace deſcends on his ſoule, then the foundations of that earth (which is in man) are ſhaken; the ſtony heart melteth, the eye aboundeth in joyfull teares, the tong is looſed, that was bound before, the minde is filled with vnaccuſtomable light, the whole ſoule with vnſpeakable comfort. Finally, ſuch an alteration is made of his whole deſires, for a change of his whole inward & outward diſpoſition, as the childe of God feeles better than hee is able to vtter. Which if wee obtaine not in prayer (as many times it falles out) lette vs receiue it as a checke of our coldneſſe, as a ſpurre to further humiliation, that ſo with a new bleſſing we may fal to and ſeek the Lord his bleſsing.

The quicknesse of faith.

And here againe we haue to conſider an other leſſon; for in this, that hee ſeekes a bleſsing from him, who wounded

wounded him, we are to take vp the nature of faith, which is of ſuch quickeneſſe, that no maruell the antient ſaid, *Fides linceos habet oculos*: for albeit the Lord would take on him the ſhape of an ennemy, and ſhew himſelfe an angry Iudge to his children, yet will they ſtill looke for fauour, and kindneſſe at his hand. It was the Lord who afflicted *Iob* with outward and inward troubles, of the which nature and ſenſe could gather no other concluſion, but that God had forſaken him, and had become his enemy. Yet faith aboue ſenſe and nature leadeth him through all theſe miſty cloudes to looke vnto God, as vnto his mercifull father; and therefore reſts hee in that notable concluſion, whereof wee haue made mention before, *Albeit the Lord ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Ber. in Epiphan ſer. 1

Faith in wrath can ſee mercie.

Iob 13.

This fulneſſe of faith dooth alſo appeare manifeſtly in all the reſt of

Faith thorow death eſpies life.

of Gods children, especially in time of trouble; for what maketh them rejoice in afflictions, and to triumph *When they are going through the valley of death*, but the sight and certainetie of a better? How commeth it, that in the same moment, wherein God is taking their temporall life from them, they are seeking an eternall life from him? Out of doubt it commeth of their liuely faith, which thorow wrath sees mercie, through the cloud of light and momentary afflictions, it beholdeth an infinit weight of glory.

Faith offendes not at the base forme and shape, in which Iesus Christ appeared, but through it, sees him to bee the King of glorie.

But this quickenesse of faith appeares most of all wonderfully in the vp-taking of Iesus Christ, for he appeared in the world disguised, *A king in shape of a seruant*: He being *the God of glory* came couered with such contemptible couerings, that the world misknew him. His miraculous conception without the helpe of man

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was obſcured with the couering of *Maries* diſpenſation to *Ioſeph:* his birth without alvncleannes obſcured with the couering of *Maries* purification: his innocencie in like manner obſcured with the couering of circumciſion: and ſo *abſconditus eſt noui ſolis fulgor*, (ſaith *Bernard*,) and thus was the glory of this bright ſhining ſunne, which the world ſaw neuer before, obſcured. Yet, through all theſe, and many couerings, that *Centurion*, through faith, eſpied him to be the ſonne of God; and theſe three wiſe men, who came from the Eaſt, by the light of faith, through all theſe vayles ſaw him to be a glorious King; and therefore alſo fell downe, and worſhipped him. But theſe blinde *Bethleemites*, amongſt whome he was borne, hauing no more but the eyes of nature, wherwith to looke vpon him, could not diſcerne him: albeit this was their glory, that out of

Bern ſer. 4 in vigil. natiuit. dom.

Math. 2. 11

Mich. Aug. ſer. 20

them came *that Gouernour, who ſhould feede his people*, by this faith *Agnouit* Simeon *infantem tacentem*, for lacke of it, *occiderunt Iudæi mirabilia facientem. Simeon* by faith, acknowledged the Lord Ieſus, euen in his infancy, when he had not yet ſpoken a word: but the Iewes for lacke of faith, blinded with infidelity, ſlew him, after that he had wrought many miracles. So then, to returne to our ground, it was a great faith in *Iacob*, that he ſought a bleſsing from him, who wreſtled againſt him. Nature will neuer learne vs that leſſon, *Come, and let vs returne to the Lord, he hath ſpoyled, and hee will heale vs, he hath wounded, and hee will bind vs vp*. Without faith, there can be no prayer to God, eſpecially at that time, when God layeth his heauie hand vpon vs: *How ſhall they call to him, in whome they beleeue not*. Where the fountaine is dry, what water can there be in the ſtrand? *ergo vt oremus credamus*,

Hoſ. 6.

credamus, & vt ipſa non deficiat fides, qua credimus, oremus. Therefore, that we may pray, let vs beleeue; and that our faith whereby we beleeue, faint not, let vs pray. And this for the fulneſſe of faith.

Perceiue yet farther out of theſe wordes, that *Iacob* ſeekes nothing from God, but his bleſsing. The children of God, euen then, when God is moſt familiar with them, ſeek nothing, comparable to his bleſsing. Herein they are inſatiable: on the earth they can neuer gette enough of his bleſsings. *Iacob* was bleſſed before of the Lord, and now againe he ſeeekes a new bleſsing, and euerie time that he meetes with the Lord, all that he deſires, is a bleſsing. It is far otherwiſe with miſerable worldlings: it is ſeldome, and far betweene, that they come to the Lord, they ſeek ſome other thing then himſelfe, or his bleſsing; ſome worldly benefite,

The godly in their prayers, aboue all thinges ſeeke gods fauour & bleſsing.

or deliuerance from temporall trouble, is the ſumme of all their ſute: So *Cain* forgetting to ſeeke mercy for his ſinne, ſought only protection to his body, *Whoſoeuer findeth me, ſhall ſlay me:* and from time to time he got that hee went *out from the preſence of the Lord*. O miſerable man, that left not behind him, ſo much as a petition to GOD for mercy, and deliuerance from that wrath, which his ſinne had vpon him!

Worldlinges in their prayers diſhonor God, and preiudges thē ſelues.

In this doing, wicked men do both diſhonour the Lord, and prejudge themſelues; they conſider not the infinite goodnes, and al-ſufficiencie of the Lorde; they meaſure him with their baſe, and earthly mindes, and therefore in ſteede of eternall, they ſeeke nothing but temporall, and periſhing things. It was a princely anſwere that *Alexander* gaue his friend *Perillus*, to whome he had offered fiftie tallentes of ſiluer, to helpe his daughters

daughters to marriage; which the other thinking too much, replied, that ten were ſufficient. Yea, ſaid *Alexander*, it were enough for thee to receaue, but not enough for me to giue. And to another in the like caſe hee gaue the like anſwere: *Ne quære, quid te accipere, ſed quid me dare, deceat.* But much more may our al-ſufficient God, that Monarch of the world indeede, who is rich vnto all who calles vpon him, giue vnto vs a greater rebuke, that cannot enlarge our harts, nor open our mouthes wide, that he may fill them with his good thinges, contenting vs to ſeek the earth, when the Lord offers vs the heauen; ſeeking with worldlings, *that our wheat, and our wine may abound:* and not with godly *Dauid, that the light of the countenance of God*, which bringes *ioy to the hart*, may be vpon vs. The Lord eſteemes this a very great indignity, and contempt done vnto him: and Pſal.4.

therfore he complaines on the Iewes, by his ſeruant the Prophet *Hoſea*, *They howle vpon me in their beddes, for wine and oyle*, they crie like dogges for that which may fill their bellies; but ſendes not out the voyce of my children, to crie vnto me for mercy, and grace.

How fooliſh they are, who in prayer ſeek other things before they ſeeke the Lord.

It is in like maner very prejudiciall to themſelues, who do it: for they faſt & wearie their ſpirits in ſeeking many things, and in the meane time, are careleſſe to ſeeke one thing; the obtayning whereof, might bring them vnto all thinges: thus they conſume themſelues with vaine labour. *Qui rerum magis ſpecie, quam authore dilectati, prius vniuerſa percurrere, & de ſingulis cupiunt expiriri, quam ad Chriſtum curent vniuerſitatis principem peruenire.* Who being delighted with the ſhew of things, more then with the Author of them, are deſirous to knowe euery thing by experience;

Ber.

but

but not careful to come vnto Chriſt, who is that head, and fountaine, of whome all thinges are: where otherwiſe, if according to the command of our bleſſed Sauiour, men would *firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God, then al other things ſhould be caſt vnto them.* This is the only compendious way, to ſatisfie our inſatiable deſires: *Quicunq; hic varia quæris, ipſe vnus tibi erit omnia:* Whatſoeuer thou be, who here ſeeks ſundry thinges, ſeeke the Lord, *And he ſhall be all things in all to thee.* *Aug ſer. 4.*

When the Lord offered to *Salomon* to giue whatſoeuer he would aske, he ſought from the Lord, a wiſe, and vnderſtanding heart, which ſo pleaſed the Lord, that not only he gaue him that which he asked, but alſo ſecond, and inferiour gifts, as riches, and honour, which he asked not; ſo great delight hath the Lorde to heare vs ſeeke from him, thoſe thinges which are greateſt, and excellent. Let vs

The only way to get other thinges, is firſt of all to ſeeke the Lord.

therefore aſcribe vnto the Lord, glory and power, he is a great King: let vs not diſhonor him, by ſeeking from him ſmall and periſhing things, the leaſt of them is enough for vs to receiue. *For we are not worthy of the leaſt of all his mercies:* but not euough for the Lord to giue: ſuppoſe the Lord would giue vs all the workes of his hand into our poſſeſsion, they ſhall be found but comfortles comforts in the end, vnleſſe we enjoy his fauour towards vs in Ieſus Chriſt.

Verſe 27. *Then he ſaid.*

Faith obtaines euery good thing that it craues.

VPon this earneſt deſire of *Iacob*, the Lord reſolues, that hee will bleſſe him: wee haue a promiſe of God, *Aske and it ſhall be giuen you*, and wee haue alſo manifold confirmations of this promiſe. *Zedekiah* ſpoke it in a flattering manner to his Princes. Ye know, *that the King can denie*

Ier. 38.

you

you nothing. But it is moſt true in the Lord our God, ſuch is his louing affection towards al his ſubjects of the kingdome of grace, that in very deed he can denie them nothing, which they aske in faith. As to the wicked, (ſaith Saint *Iames*) they aske, and gette not, becauſe they aske not in faith, nor for the right end. It is written of *Vitellius* the Emperour, that one of his friendes being refuſed of his petition, which was not reaſonable, waxed angry, and ſaid vnto him; what auailes to me thy frindſhip, ſeeing I cannot obtaine that which I craue? who replies vnto him, and what auailes to me thy friendſhip, if for thee, I muſt doe that which is vnlawfull? If ſuch equity hath beene found in man, what ſhall we thinke of our God? with what face dare we ſeeke that from God, which is vnlawfull to be giuen? But whatſoeuer we aske of the Lord in faith, we

are

Faith, a rare iewel, and why?

are ſure to obtayne it, or a better. Sō rare a jewell is faith, that he who hath it, hath all thinges to be his: God for his Father; Ieſus Chriſt for his Sauiour; the holy Ghoſt for his Comforter; the Angels for his miniſtring Spirits; this world for a ſojorning place; all the good creatures therein for his Seruants; and the heauen for his inheritance: therefore ſaid *Cyrill*, *Lata mercatura eſt fides*.

Cyril. catech 17.

A newe name is giuen to Iacob.

Before the Lorde bleſſe him, hee askes *Iacob* what his name was: he anſwered, My name is *Iacob*: to whom the Lord ſaies, Thou ſhalt no more be calld *Iacob* (only,) but ſhalt be caled *Iſrael* alſo. I giue thee now a new name, and this bleſsing, that as thou haſt had power with God, ſo hereafter ſhalt thou preuaile with men: fear not therefore the face of thy brother *Eſau*. He that gaue thee ſtrength in this wreſtling, ſhall ſuſtaine thee alſo in all thy conflictes with men.

Thus

Thus the Lorde will haue *Iacob* vſe the preſent experience of gods mercy at this time, as a confirmation of him in all time to come.

Iacob then (as yee ſee) hath twoo names, and both of them hee gettes from wreſtling. He wreſtled once with his brother *Eſau* in the wombe of his mother, and from it hee receiued the name *Iacob*, becauſe he held his brother by the heele. Now againe hee wreſtleth with the Lorde, and from it hee receiueth this other name *Iſrael*, a Prince of God. As it was with *Iacob*, ſo is it with all the true Iſraelites of God; wreſtling abides them, and in wreſtling they muſt bee exerciſed, ſometimes with God, as *Iſrael*, ſometime with man, as *Iacob* with *Eſau*, and *Paule* with beaſtes at *Epheſus*. No man is crowned before hee ſtriue: the husbandman muſt labour before hee receiue the fruit; and we, by many tribulations

Iacob has twonames and they both are frō wreſtling.

tions muſt enter into the kingdome of God.

With the new name God alſo giueth him new grace

Againe, yee ſee, that as the Lord beſtoweth vppon *Iacob* a new name, ſo therewithall hee beſtoweth vpon him new graces, encreaſe of faith, and ſpirituall ſtrength to reſiſt tentations. It is not the Lords maner of dealing to ſet out his ſeruants with vaine and glorious titles, which import nothing when hee giues them a new name: hee giueth alſo new graces anſwerable to the name; by his word hee calles things to be, which were not, *Soli Deo idem facere quod loqui*, for vnto God it is one to ſpeak, and to doe. And hee giueth names to thinges according as they are. Sometime he changeth a name from the better to the worſe, as the place once called *Bethel*, the houſe of God, the Lord called it *Bethauen*, the houſe of vanitie: and this the Lord dooth not, but where a change is indeede from

Ber. hom. 4. ſuper miſſus eſt.

from good vnto euill. Sometime againe hee chaungeth the name from the woorſe to the better. *Where it was ſayde vnto you, Yee are not my people, it ſhall be ſayde, Yee are the ſonnes of the liuing God:* and this he doth not but where a change is indeede of the perſons, who gets the name from euill vnto good. Hoſ.

And this is a rule, whereby wee may trie our ſelues, whether the new name that appertayneth to Chriſtians, be giuen vnto vs of the Lorde, or not; or if we haue vſurped it our ſelues. If the Lord haue changed thy name, as he did *Iacobs* name, let it appeare in this, that he hath alſo changed thy ſelfe. Hath hee giuen thee that grace, which the name imports? *Haſt thou receiued an ointment from that Holie one?* Hath hee illuminate thy darke? quickened thy dead heart? ſanctified thy vncleane affections? Then mayeſt thou be ſure, that thou haſt Bythis rnle we ſhould trie, if the new chriſtiã name be competent to vs or no. Ioh.

haſt receiued thy name from God: but if yet wee be ſuch as remayne in our naturall eſtate, liuing in our old ſinnes, vnder the new name of a Chriſtian; as now the moſt profane men haue gotten on the couering of a Chriſtian name, and *Eſau* dooth putte on him the apparrell of *Iacob*: thou that ſo dooſt, mayeſt be ſure, the Lorde neuer gaue vnto thee this new name, but thou haſt violently vſurped it vnto thy ſelfe. It ſhall be no more auaileable to thee than was the garment of good king *Iehoſaphat* vnto wicked *Achab*: yea it ſhal augment ſo much the more the wrath of God vpon thee, becauſe that vnder an holy name, thou haſt liued an vnholy life. *Beltaſar* ſinned againſt God by exceſſe and intemperancie, but that hee abuſed the holy veſſells of the houſe of God, to ſerue him to profane drinking, was a double ſin. a horrible ſacrilege, yet not ſo horrible

It is a horrible ſacriledge, to ſin vnder the chriſtian name.

rible as thine. He abuſed dead veſſelles, but thou profaneſt a liuing ſoule and body; they are not thine owne, they were once made by the Lord & bought againe by the price of his bloud, and ſo by all right are the Lordes, by baptiſme they were ſeparate to the ſeruice of God and his marke put vpon them. Notwithſtanding all this, thou dareſt ſacrilegiouſly abuſe them, and make them weapons of vnrighteouſneſſe to the ſeruice of Sathan. O miſerable man! what feareful judgement mayſt thou looke for at the handes of God? *The wrath of God is reuealed againſt all vngodlineſſe and vnrighteouſneſſe of man. Tribulation and anguiſh ſhall be vppon the ſoule of euery man that dooth euill, euerie man ſhall receiue according to that which he hath done in the bodie.* Turkes and Pagans ſhall not eſcape vnpuniſht, but thou that abuſeſt thy ſoule and body to the ſeruice of Sathan, which by

by baptisme wert separate and consecrate to the Lord, committest a double sacrilege, and therefore may look for a double judgement, except in time thou repent.

It is the curse of the wicked to pray, & not prevaile, but it is not so with the godly.

Because thou hast had power with God: As *Iacob* sought a blessing, so at the length hee getteth it; for the Lorde at the last will *fulfill the desires of them, who feare him.* The desire of the child of God, is as a birth conceiued in the soule of man, which shall not die, but come to perfection. *Salomon* promised to giue his mother *Bathsheba*, whatsoeuer shee would aske, and it were to the halfe of his kingdome; yet when she asked, that *Abishag* the *Shunamite* might be giuen to *Adoniah* his brother to wife, *Salomon* refused to graunt it. Thus men can promise much, and performe little: it is not so with the Lord our God. He hath bidden vs pray, hee hath promised to heare, and shall not also faile to performe,

performe, *Nunquam oranti beneficia denegabit, qui orantes vt ne deficiant, ſua pietate inſtigat.* He will neuer denie his benefits to vs, when we pray, who prouokes vs to pray.

But as to the wicked, *the hope of the Hypocrite ſhall periſh:* their ſoules are full of deſires, like ſo many ſtrong voyces, crying for that, which they ſhall neuer obtayne; they wait vpon lying vanities, which ſhall neuer come to paſſe. *Quid tam pœnale, quam ſemper velle, quod nunquam erit, & ſemper nolle, quod nunquam non erit, in æternum non obtinebit, quod vult, & in æternum quod non vult ſuſtinebit.* What puniſhment more fearefull can fall on a man, then that he ſhould euer wiſh, that which neuer ſhalbe, and ay wiſh that were not, which ſhal be for euer: that which he will, he ſhall neuer obtayne; and that which he will not, he ſhall for euer ſuſtaine: and yet this is a miſerable eſtate of the wicked. Let

Miſerable are the wicked, for they deſire that, which they ſhall neuer obtayne.

vs therefore take heede to our prædominate deſires; for miſerable are they, whoſe deſires are on the world, more then on the Lord; and on vaniſhing trifles, more then vpon his permanent mercies. For when the Lord hath filled their bellies with his hidden treaſure, and giuen them enough, that they leaue the reſt behinde to their children: what haue they more to craue from the Lord? They haue gotten their deſire, they are not to looke that euer they ſhall be pertakers of the felicitie of Gods choſen, their hart was neuer ſet vpon it, *they haue receiued their conſolation on the earth*, they haue no more to looke for. Werefore our Sauiour pronounceth a fearefull woe vpon them, and no meruaile; for miſerable indeede is their condition, their conſolatiō dies, before they die themſelues; their comforts forſake them, before they goe out of the world: and like the Gowrd

The wicked haue receiued their conſolatiō on earth.

Gowrd of *Ionas*, withereth before their eyes: in their life they ſate vnder the ſhadowe of it, but in their death it is gone, and they find no comfort in it. Well knew *Dauid* their miſery, and therefore praies he, *Deliuer mee O Lord, from the men of the world, who haue their portion in this life:* that is, let me neuer be one of them. Wee haue therefore to marke, where-away the benefits of our affections doe carrie vs, for if we feele the Lords bleſsing, no doubt we ſhall finde it; and if the deſire of our harts be aboue al things towardes the Lorde, ſuch a deſire I meane, as vſeth the meanes that may bring vs vnto him; for otherwiſe wicked *Balaam* will deſire, *Oh that I might die of the righteous!* which he ſhal not obtayne. But let vs goe the right way to mercy, proteſting with godly *Dauid, O Lord I deſire to doe thy commandements*, and then no doubt the Lord ſhall crowne vs with mercies,

Ion.

Pſal.

and compaſsions at the laſt.

Thou ſhalt preuaile with men. I doe now heere by my word (wil the Lord ſay) inueſt thee in this priuiledge, that no power of man ſhall be able to ouercome thee. Goe on therefore with courage in thy journey which I haue commaunded thee, and feare not any thing, that man is able to do againſt thee. Where it is to be marked, that the Lord promiſeth not to his ſeruant any immunity from affliction: yea by the contrary, the Lord fore-warnes, that men wil make oppoſition to him; for where no oppoſition is made by men, how can there be a priuiledge by *Iacob*? It is needefull we conſider, what it is that the Lord hath promiſed vnto vs, leſt looking for that, which he hath not promiſed vs, we deceiue our ſelues. Many in the time of trouble, make foule apoſtacie from Chriſt, and al bicauſe, when they entred in the profeſsion of chriſtian

No immunity from affliction promiſed vnto vs.

chriſtian religion, they conſidered not they could not be his Diſciples, except that they beare his Croſſe, but fooliſhly lookt for ſome temporall eaſe, or worldly commodity in the following of Chriſt, which hee neuer promiſed them. Theſe are profeſſors like to the *Samaritans*, who ſo long as the Iewiſh religion flouriſhed, and was in honour, cauſed alſo to be built, a temple on a high mountaine of *Samaria*, named *Garizyn*, that in this they ſhould not be inferior to the Iewes. They boaſted themſelues to be the progenie of *Ioſeph*, & worſhippers of God alſo with them: but when they perceiued that the Iewes were cruelly afflicted for worſhipping God by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, & fearing leſt they ſhuld be alſo handled in the like manner, they chaunged their coat, affirming, that they were not *Iſraelites*, but *Sidonians*, and had built their temple, not vnto God,

Many not cõſidering this, become apoſtataes in the time of trouble.

Carol. Sigon. de repub. hcb.

but *Iupiter:* thus a little winde ſeperates the chaffe, and the corne, and a fierce tryall diſtinguiſheth the counterfeit, and true profeſſor.

This made the Iewes ſtumble at Chriſt, becauſe they looked for a temporal kingdome.

In like maner, the ignorant Iewes, becauſe they vnderſtoode not the promiſes made concerning the *Meſſia*, looked that Chriſt ſhould haue reſtored vnto thē their temporall kingdome, peaceably, and free: whereof, when they ſawe themſelues diſappoynted, they were offended with him, and perſecuted him to the death. It were therefore good for vs that we ſhould follow the counſaile of our Sauiour, and reckon with our ſelues in time, in what ſtate of life we enter, when we enter to the profeſsion of chriſtianity, *before we build a tower, let vs count the coſt, whether we haue ſufficient to performe it, leſt that whē we haue laid the foundation, and not able to performe;* we fall not vnder this ſhame, to be mocked of men, but bring vpon

Luc. 14. 28

pon our ſelues a more fearefull wrath of God. *For it had beene better, not to haue knowne the way of righteouſnes, then after we haue knowne it, to turne from the holy commandement giuen vnto vs, like dogs to the vomit, and like the ſowe that was waſhed, to the wallowing in the mire.* 2. Pet. 2. 20

If we could reſolue in time, that *they who will liue godly in Chriſt, muſt ſuffer perſecution,* and arme our ſelues before hand thereunto, reckoning with our ſelues, that of the Lords indulgence, wee are ſpared euery day, wherein ſome notable croſſe is not laid vpon vs, then certainely ſhould wee account the leſſe of trouble, when it comes vnto vs. Tim.

We haue here againe to conſider the connexion of theſe wordes, *becauſe thou haſt had power with God, thou ſhalt preuaile with men:* and out of them ye may perceiue, that the Lord will haue this wreſtling of *Iacobs*, wherein he was exerciſed, immediately by the

Lord, to be a preparation vnto him againſt other tentations, which were to come by men. Wherein is ſhaddowed vnto vs, how the Lord doth firſt prepare his children by wreſtling with himſelfe, before he ſend them out to encounter with men, and ſo makes the inward exerciſes of their mindes, preparations, whereby they are made readie the better to endure all outward troubles, that come from men.

The Lord by inward exerciſes of conſcience, maks his childrē ſtrong to endure outward troubles which come frō men.

This made *Moſes* that he was not afraid of the face of *Pharaoh*, becauſe he had ſeene firſt the face of God, *for he ſaw* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *him who was inuiſible: The Kings wrath* (ſayth *Salomon*) is as *the roring of a lion*: but when the Lord vtters his wrath, then the heart and countenaunce of the greateſt monarch of the world make him as high as *Beltaſar*, ſhall faile him; he will neuer loſe a good conſcience for feare of the wrath of man, that

Heb. 11.

Pro. 19. 12

knoweth

knoweth the power of the wrath of God: Feare not the man whoſe breath is in his noſthrilles: the moſt he can doe, and that by permiſsion, *hee is able to kill the body*, but let vs feare the Lorde, *who is able to caſt both ſoule and bodie into hell fire*. This ſuſtained aged *Policarpus* againſt all the threatnings of the Proconſull. *Ignem minaris ad horam arſurum, & paulo poſt extinguendum, ignoras vero ignem illum futuri iudicij & æterni ſupplicij impijs reſeruatum:* Thou threatneſt me (ſaith hee) with a fire which will burne for an houre, and ſhortly after be quenched, but thou knoweſt not that fire of the judgement to come reſerued for the wicked, which will burne for euer. It is the holy feare of God, which baniſheth out of our harts the prophane feare of men, that wee will not doe euill to offend the Lord; no, not for all the paines that can followe vs in this preſent life. And therefore the

Lord

Eſa.

Euſeb. lib. 4 cap. 16.

They feare not much the wrath of man, who haue beene hũbled with the ſence of the wrath of God.

Lord in great mercie towardes his children, dooth ſometimes exerciſe them with the ſenſe of his wrath, and letteth them feele the ſting of an accuſing conſcience, that ſo they may come out to the worlde, ſtrong in the Lorde againſt outward tentations; fully reſolued rather to diſpleaſe mē, than the Lord, rather to indure preſent puniſhments, than to caſt themſelues vnder daunger of the wrath which is to come. And ſo are the children of god to reckon with themſelues, that their inward wreſtlings, are preparatiues for outward troubles.

Verſe 29. *And Iacob asked, What is thy name?*

It is a ſinfull curioſitie, to ſecke to

NOw, *Iacob* hauing receiued the bleſsing, proceedes in the conference, and deſireth to knowe the name

name of him, who bleſſed him: No doubt but hee knew before, that it was the Lord, otherwiſe he had not ſought a bleſsing from him. It ſtandeth not with the nature of faith, *To pray to any in whome we beleeue not.* By this queſtion hee attaineth not to any new knowledge; for hee who bleſſed him, refuſeth to tell his name; but *Iacob* by calling the place *Peniel*, as afterwards followes, plainely declares hee knew it was the Lord. So then this asking importeth not, that *Iacob* did not know it was the Lorde, that had giuen him the bleſsing, only it declareth an earneſt deſire in *Iacob* to haue had a more familiar reuelation of the Lord to him: which I thinke he did of a good minde and intention, ſuch as *Moſes* had when he deſired to ſee the face of God. Yet ye ſee al our good intentions are not alway approoued of the Lord. With his good intention there is joyned a peece

know that which god hath not taught vs.

Rom.

peece of curiositie, that he will haue more knowledge of the majestie of God than the Lord thought expedient to communicate vnto him; otherwise the Lorde had not refused him.

Especially; to search out the diuine maiestie, farthe then it is reuealed tovs in the word.

To seeke a greater perfection of knowledge, where the Lord offers it, is very commendable, but to aspire to knowe that which God will not teach, and namely, to search out that diuine majesty farther than hee pleaseth to reueale himselfe, is curiosity and presumption worthy to be damned, *He that searches: Quantus sit Deus & quæ illius mensura & qualis essentia, talia scisciranti sunt periculosa ei qui rogatur complexa, & talium medicina est silentium.* To aske the quantity, and measure of God, or what is his essence: such questions are perillous to him that asketh, intricate to him that is asked at, and are best answerd by silence. There be names whereby the Lord expresseth himselfe

Pro. *Basil. de martyre Mamante.*

ſelfe to vs according to our capacity, but as to his proper name, it is him ſelfe, it can not be comprehended. *Why askeſt thou my name, which is wonderfull?* And from this curioſitie *Iacob* here by Gods reproofe is reſtrained. This ſinne with our nature we haue drawne from our firſt father *Adam*, the knowledge wherewith God indued him contented him not, he aſpired to man, and ſought to be equall with God in the knowledge of good and euil. And that this poyſon from *Adam* is propagate to his poſteritie, dooth daily appeere among the common fruites of our corruption; for eyther wee are careleſſe to learne thoſe thinges, whereof the Lord hath offred himſelfe a teacher, or elſe wee are curious ſearchers of thoſe things, which the Lord hath kept ſecret and hidden from vs. Iud.

There are two poynts of knowledge moſt excellent and needefull for 2. pointes of neceſſa

ry knowledge.

for man; the first, *to knowe God, and him whome he hath sent, for heerein consists eternal life:* the second is, to know our selues, and the state of our owne consciences. But such is the vanitie of the minde of man, that with *Adam* had rather eate of the tree of knowledge, than of the tree of life, and delighteth to be wel read in any book, rather than in the booke of his owne conscience. And ye may mark in the carnall professors of this age, that if at any time they beginne to speake of Theologie, then do they handle diuine things in a diuellish manner, altogether *inexpert in the woordes of righteousnesse:* and hauing no skill to *speake the language of Canaan*, eyther else they talke profanely vppon that which God hath reuealed, insisting most in points of doctrine least profitable for them, or then curiously they enquire for that which God hath concealed from them, not remembring

Yet neglected by Adams sins, who desired rather to eate of the tree of knowlege, then of the tree of life. Heb.

membring that warning of *Moſes*, *ſecret things are for the Lord, but things reuealed are for vs and our children.* Deut.

This curious demaund of *Iacobs*, is anſwered with a gentle refuſall, *Why ſpeares thou my name?* The Interrogator ſtriues to ſend *Iacob* within himſelfe, that by a new tryall taken of his ſpeach within his owne mind, hee might ſee how vnneceſſary, and vnprofitable his petition was. After this maner it is cuſtomable to the Lord to rebuke the friuolous curioſities of his owne children, that wee may learne to be ſober, and not *preſume aboue that which is written.* *In his quæ de Deo dicuntur, maxima eſt ſcientia ignorantiam ſuam fateri, terram inhabitas, & terræ fines ignoras, quo modo conditorem tuum terræ comprehendes, animam habes cuius facultates enumerare non vales, Stellas vides quas numerare non potes, numera prius illa, quæ vides, & tunc illum, qui non apparet, enarra.* In thoſe

This curioſitie bridled, and reproued

Rom. Cyril. ca-tech. 6.

thoſe things which concerne the divinity, it is a great knowledge to acknowledge our ignoraunce; thou dwelleſt in the earth, and knoweſt not the borders thereof: how then ſhalt thou comprehend him, who is Maker of the earth? thou haſt within thee a ſoule, the faculties whereof thou art not able to enumerate; thou ſeeſt the ſtarres, and canſt not tell the nuuber of them: beginne firſt, and reckon out thoſe thinges which thou ſeeſt, and then, if thou canſt, Him that is not ſeene. Let vs therefore reſtraine our ſelues from ſuch idle ſpeculations; and if others ſpare not to proue vs with the like of theſe raſh and perillous queſtions, which I haue condemned, then remember with *Baſill, Talium optima, medicina eſt ſilentium.*

The Lord ſometimes refuſeth to giue that,

Yet it is to be marked, that albeit he refuſe to tell *Iacob* his name; yet he refuſeth not to giue *Iacob* his bleſſing.

ſing. Sometime the Lord graunteth his children their deſires, becauſe he ſees it is for their weale. Other times he refuſeth them, and that alſo for their weale: but whether he ſay yea, or no to their petitions, hee workes alway in mercy towards them. Hee granted fleſh to the children of *Iſrael*, becauſe they ſought it, but therewithall his wrath fell vpon them: of the which it is euident, that ſomtime hee granteth men their petitions, becauſe he is angry with them. Others againe he refuſeth, bicauſe he is mercifull to them, denying vnto them that which they craue, but granting an other thing, which is much more profitable for them; *Multi Deo irato exaudiuntur, multis propitius Deus non tribuit, quod volunt, vt quod vtile eſt tribuat:* The Apoſtle *Paul* being buffeted by the angel of Sathan, beſoght the Lord thrice, that he might be deliuered from him, he receiued

which his children ſeeks, that hee may giue thē o therthings more cōuenient for them.

Aug. de vnitat. Eccl. cap. 19.

a refuſall of that which he ſought, & yet the Lord left him not deſtitute of comfort: *Sæpe multos Deus non exaudit ad voluntatem, vt exaudiat ad ſalutem:* In the firſt of the Actes, the diſciples aske a queſtion at Chriſt, *Wilt thou at this time reſtore the kingdome to Iſrael?* But what aunſwere receiue they? a plaine refuſall: *It is not for you to know the times, and ſeaſons*: yet hee promiſeth to them a better thing; *But yee ſhall receiue power of the Holy-Ghoſt.*

Bern.

Act. 1.

O happy exchange! let it be vnto vs, O Lord, according to thy worde; deny vs, O Lorde, anie thing thou wilt, but neuer deny to vs thy holy Spirit, that it may leade vs into all trueth, ſo long as we remaine here; and in th'end, may bring vs vnto the ſight of thy joyfull face. Let vs giue vnto the Lord this glory, that he is our mercifull Father, not onely when hee graunteth, but euen when he refuſeth ſome of thoſe things

And this is a happy exchange, whereunto wee ſhuld ha rtilie agree.

things which we deſire. It may well ſtand, that being diſeaſed, we doe ſeeke of the Lord bodily health, and ſeeke it too with this reſtriction, if it pleaſe him; and yet thou obtaine it not, the Lorde thinking it good to keepe thee vnder a ſicke body, to the end he may reſtore vnto thee, health of thy ſoule; for ſo may ye reade in the goſpell, that many being mooued by bodily diſeaſes, who otherwiſe were not minded to come vnto Ieſus Chriſt, hath found in him, health both of body and ſoule. It may alſo fall out, that thou do ſeeke from the Lord, temporall riches, and that conditionaly, if it pleaſe him, for a benefit, that thou be not burdenous vnto others, and yet the Lord thinkes it more expedient, to refuſe thee, leſt riches ſhould be a ſnare vnto thee; for vnto many they are but *Speciosa vincula, quibus alligantur, & à quibus possidentur, magis quam possident.*

Bodilie ſickneſſe hath chaſed many to their ſoules health.

Riches refuſed to ſome of Gods children, for their greater good.

Cyp. lib. 2. Epiſt. 2.

dent. Beautifull bandes wherewith they are bound, which they poſſeſſe not, but are poſſeſſed of him. Thus their proſperity and riches becomes their ruine, ſo corrupt is our nature, that the ſame giftes, which ſhoulde drawe our hearts after the Lord, are alurements to turne them from him: *Facile enim cor humanum omnibus, quæ frequentat, adhæret adeo, vt vix, aut nunquam ſine amore valeant poſſideri:* For the heart of man cleaueth very eaſily vnto that, wherewith it is acquainted, ſo that hardly or neuer can we poſſeſſe the thinges of this worlde, without immoderate loue of them. And therfore the Lord in great mercie take them from vs, that they doe not take vs from him. Let vs therefore commit the ſucceſſe of our praiers to the Lord, let vs not preſume to *limitate the Holy one of Iſrael*, being alway comforted with this, that if the Lord denie vs, that which wee would

Ber. ſuper Math. 19. Ecce nos reliquimus omnia.

Pſal.

would haue, hee ſhall giue vs an o-thing, which is more expedient for vs.

Verſe 30. *And Iacob called the name of the place* Peniel, *&c.*

THE conference betweene the Lord, and *Iacob*, being ended, *Moſes* now makes mention of *Iacobs* thankefulneſſe, which he declareth in two things: firſt hee impones ſuch a name to the place, as might ſtand for a perpetuall memoriall of Gods familiar apparition vnto him. And next, he rendreth himſelfe obedient, not regarding any daunger, that might be before him, truſting vnto the worde of the Lorde, hee goeth with courage forward in his journey.

How Iacob ſhews himſelfe thankfull to God for the benefits receiued, in two thinges.

Firſt I ſay, he impones a name to the place, and calleth it *Peniell, the face of God*, he giueth the reaſon, be-

cauſe I haue ſeene the face of God, and my life is preſerued. Seeing the Lord (will hee ſay) hath ſhewne me this mercy, that I haue ſeene his face, and am not confounded; I will neuer burne it in vnthankfulneſſe; and therefore, that it may be remembred of the poſterity I call this place by the name *Peniel*. It becommeth (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *vpright men to be thankefull*. Seeing all good things come of God, it is good reaſon the praiſe of all ſhould returne vnto him. As the waters that come ſecretly from the ſea, through the veines of the earth, returne againe in their troghs publiquely vnto it, ſo euery good thing, which the ſecret bleſsing of God hath conueyed vnto vs, by publike praiſe, ſhoulde agayne returne vnto him. If wee haue gotten comfort from the Lord, we ſhould giue vnto the Lord his glory. And it is the manner of the children of God.

Such thãk fulnes becomes the children of God.

Pſal.

Pro.

God, they can not reſt contented, when God hath refreſhed them with his mercies, till the Lord get his own praiſe. And heereof it commeth, that they erect publike monuments, and memorialls, or at the leaſt ſend out publike thankeſgiuing for theſe mercies, which God priuately and ſecretly hath beſtowed vppon them.

The great vnthankfulneſſe of the wicked.

But as to the wicked, they ſwallow vp the benefites of God in vnthankefull obliuion: if the Lord increaſe their wealth and proſperitie, they ſacrifice to their owne net, as though their prouidence and witte had dooneit: and if hee do preſerue them from daungers, they impute their deliuerance to their idoll, *They make their mouth to kiſſe their hand*, as if their owne arme had ſaued them. Thus are they like vnto that ſalt ſea, whereinto *Iordan* floweth, it ſwalloweth vp all the water of *Iordan*, but waxeth no greater; neither yet doth

the ſalt and bitter waters thereof become ſweeter, for all that the wicked receiue from the Lord, their olde ſcent remayneth in them; they are not the better, neyther is their heart inlarged to praiſe him. They do take from the Lorde, without giuing agayne, like barren and vnprofitable ground, that deuoureth ſeede, and renders nothing: *And therefore is neare vnto curſing, whoſe end is burning.* Learne therefore, O man to be thankefull to thy God. Euery benefite that thou haſt receiued, that encreaſeth not thy thankefulneſſe, ſhal aſſuredly encreaſe thy judgement: *Quem enim beneficia accepta meliorem non reddunt, is certè etiam grauius ſupplicium commeretur:* Hee whome benefites receiued maketh not the better, dooth aſſuredly thereby demerite heauier puniſhments.

Hoſ. 6.

Chryſoſt. de Sacerd. li. 4

How is it that the ſight of

We are next to conſider, how is it that *Iacob* accounts it a great mercie, that

that he hath ſeene God, and yet his life preſerued, ſeeing the Lord is *the God of comfort?* how is it his preſence ſhould bring a terrour vnto men? it is his countenance that makes glad the hart: when he hides his face, the creature is troubled; but when hee ſendes forth his ſpirit, they are created. And the face of the earth is renued, *when thou didaeſt hide thy face* (ſaith *Dauid*) *I was ſore troubled.* How is it then, that *Iacob* here ſhould ſay, that the ſight of the face of God cauſeth death, and that his countenance ſhould confound man? *Adam* in paradiſe in the ſtate of innocency was familiar with God, he ſaw, & heard the Lord, and was comforted: from whence then commeth this change, that man cannot ſee the Lord, and liue? Surely the fault is not in the Lorde, his countenance is the welſpring of life: *he is the father of light, and the God of all conſolation.* The fault

God terrifies man ſeing he is the God of comfort.

Pſal. 104. 29.

The cauſe of this, is not in the

Lord, but in our sins Iam.

fault is in vs, in our sinfull, and peruerted nature. Faulty & weake eies, cannot beholde the light without paine, not for any euill which is in the light which is good, and comfortable, but for the infirmity which is in themselues. And sinfull men cannot see the Lord without feare, not for any fault in the Lord, who is mercifull, and gratious; but for that peruerse disposition, which sin hath wrought in our selues. This made the *Israelites* to tremble, when they heard him, and made that holy Prophet *Esay* crie out, *woe is me*, when he saw but a similitude, and representation of his Majestie. And who then may abide that Majestie in it selfe?

Exod. Esa. 6.

Sin therefore is to bee remoued, if we would see the Lord with ioy.

These three pillars of the Church *Peter*, *Iames*, and *Iohn*, fel down to the ground, astonished at a small manifestation of his glory: the brightnes of his glorious face, shining like the sunne,

ſunne, confounded them: and how then ſhould they beare the glory of his diuinity? And in vs it is this ſame ſinfull nature, which only hinders vs from the ſight and familiaritie of our God. What then ſhall wee doe, but embrace the counſaile of the Apoſtle S. *Iohn? Whoſoeuer hath this hope in himſelfe* (namely to ſee God) *purgeth himſelfe, euen as God is pure.* We muſt remoue our ſinnes, and drawe the powers of our ſoules, to ſome neerer conformity with the Lord, if ſo be we hope to dwell with him. *For without peace and ſanctification, no man can ſee the Lord.*

1. Ioh. 3.

Heb. 12.

But heere againe it is to be asked, how ſaies *Iacob* he ſawe the face of God; ſeeing the Lorde gaue *Moſes* this anſwere when he ſought a ſight of his face? *No man can ſee me, and liue:* and we know that the Baptiſt ſaith, *No man hath ſeene God at any time, but the Sonne, who is come from the boſome of the*

In what ſence ſaith Iacob, he ſawe the face of God.

the Father, he hath reuealed him. How is it then I ſay, that *Iacob* heere ſaith, *I haue ſeene God, face to face?*

I anſwere, that this is ſpoken in compariſon of other viſions, and reuelations made to *Iacob* before: his meaning is no other, but that he had now ſeene the Lord, by a more excellent and notable manner of apparition, then euer he had ſeene before. And where *Moſes* is ſaid to haue ſeene the Lord face to face, this is only ſpoken in compariſon of *Moſes*, with other Prophets, who had not ſo cleare a reuelation of the majeſtie of God, as *Moſes had:* this is euident out of the Lordes owne wordes. *If there be a Prophet of the Lorde among you, I will be knowne to him by a viſion, and ſpeake to him by a dreame: my ſeruant* Moſes *is not ſo, who is faithfull in all my houſe, to him will I ſpeake mouth to mouth, not in darke wordes, and he ſhall ſee the ſimilitude of the Lord.* Yea let

no

no man thinke, becauſe of theſe wordes, that any of the Fathers ſaw the Lord as he is; thou canſt not ſee the ſunne as it is. He that a farre off lookes to the ſea, ſaies trulie that hee hath ſeene the ſea: but what is it that he ſees, in reſpect of that which he ſeeth not? Yea wee cannot ſee a mortall man as he is, and how then ſhall we ſee the Lord, as he is? If the Fathers had ſeene the Lord, as he is, then all the Fathers had ſeene him one manner of way; becauſe God in himſelfe is one, ſimple, and vndiuided eſſence: but they ſaw him many manner of waies, in diuers formes, and apparitions. To *Iacob* hee appeared in the forme of a man; to *Moſes* he appeared in a fierie buſh; to the *Iſraelites* in a clowde; to *Elias* in a ſoft and calme ayre; to *Eſay* in another manner of viſion: all which doe prooue, that he ſhewed not himſelfe, neither did they ſee him as he is, but only

Neuer any man ſawe the Lorde as he is, on the earth.

only in ſuch manner of manifeſtation, as the Lord thought moſt expedient for the time.

Neither ſhall wee ſee the lord in the heauen as he is,& why?

But what ſpeake I of the ſight of God on the earth? we ſhall not ſee him as he is in the heauens. For euen theſe holy Angels, which ſtand about his throne, are deſcribed vnto vs, couering their faces with their two wings, witneſsing thereby, that there is a God, of a more infinite glory, then they are able to comprehend. And no meruaile. For euery creature, Man, or Angell, is infinite: a veſſell of limitate, and definite boundes. Now ſure it is, that no finite thing, can comprehend that which is infinite, that *peace of God*, promiſed vnto vs, *paſſeth all vnderſtanding: and theſe thinges prepared for vs, are ſuch, as the hart of man cannot vnderſtand*. What then ſhall wee thinke of him, who prepared them? Muſt not his glorious majeſtie by

infinite

infinite degrees ſurpaſſe the reach of our vnderſtanding?

Yet I ſpeake not this to take away that ſight of God, which wee ſhall haue in the heauens. It muſt be true which the Apoſtle ſaith, *We ſhal ſee him as he is*, it being vnderſtood with theſe reſtrictions: Firſt the ſight of God which we will haue in heauen, ſhall be perfect in reſpect of vs; the Lord ſhall dwell in vs fullie, and repleniſh euery power, and facultie of ſoule and body, with his joyfull preſence. Hee ſhall fill my whole minde with his light, no darknes ſhall be left in it: he ſhall quicken my whole hart, no more deadnes ſhall be in it, and the whole affections ſhall be repleniſhed with his peace, and joy. Now the Lord dwelles in vs, but hee filles vs not. We are yet hungry, and thirſtie: *We knowe*, but in part, but in the heauens we ſhall be filled perfectly with that

What ſight of God ſhall we haue in the heauens?

pre-

It shall be a perfect sight in respect of vs

presence, *wherein is the fulnesse of ioy:* the Lord shall then be *all things, in al vnto vs.* Now the greatest measure of the sence of mercy, is called by the holy spirit, *a tasting taste, and consider how gratious the Lord is:* but there is promised vnto vs a full satisfaction; *ye shall be satisfied: Inebriabor ab vbertate domus tuæ,* I cal this sight perfect in respect of vs; the Lord shall fill all that is in vs, we shall desire no more: but we shall not bee able to comprehend all that is in the Lord. *Augustine* expresseth this by a proper similitude: for he compares the godly in the heauens, to vessels cast into the sea, were they neuer so large, they shall be filled full of water; and yet that which they containe, is nothing in comparison of that great aboundance, which is about them. So euery godly man glorified in heauen, shall be fullie filled with Gods comfortable presence,

ſence, ſo that he ſhal know no want, and yet ſhall he not be able to comprehend that infinite majeſtie, and peace, and ioy, and glory, of the incomprehenſible God. Therefore ſaid I, that in reſpect of vs, we ſhall haue in the heauens a perfect ſight of God, that is, ſo farre as we can be capable of him. *Menſuram plenam, & ſuperfluentem tunc dabit in ſinus veſtros.* A good meaſure, preſt, & running ouer, ſaith our Sauiour, ſhall be then giuen into your boſomes. Luc.

2 It ſhall be an immediate ſight.

Secondly, that ſight of God, that in heauen wee ſhall enjoy, ſhall bee immediate, and this is ſuch a ſight, as none can vnderſtand till wee get it. Yet to make it as plaine as we may, let vs compare it with that which we haue heere in earth. The ſight that now wee haue of God, is as *through a glaſſe or a vaile*, that is, by mediate reuelations. Now we know him, by ſeeing him in his creatures: we know

him, by hearing him in his word: we know him alſo euen in the earth, by ſpirituall meditation, that begetteth ſome ſecret ſenſe of his mercie: yet all theſe are a *walking by faith, not by ſight*; at the leaſt, but a darke ſight of God, and through couerings: but in the heauen we ſhall ſee him, not by halues, but by an immediate ſight, which we ſhal then beſt vnderſtand (as I ſayde) when wee ſhall attaine vnto it. The Lorde of his mercy purge and prepare vs in time, and then haſten that day, wherein wee ſhall ſee him.

No ſight of God in heauen, except firſt we ſee him in the earth.

And yet becauſe eternall life muſt be begunne on the earth, and that it is not poſsible we can ſee God in the heauen, vnleſſe we haue firſt ſeene him in the earth; let vs take heede vnto thoſe three things whereby we may attaine vnto the ſight of God. Firſt remember, that God, without his owne light, cannot be ſeene: the

And hereunto three things are to be required.

eie,

eie, ſuppoſe it be an organe of ſight, were it neuer ſo quick, ſeeth nothing in the darke; the Sunne, without the Sunne cannot be ſeene: farre leſſe can the Lord be ſeene without the Lord. *In thy light* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſhall we ſee light*. If therefore we would beginne to ſee the Lorde, *let vs walke in his light*, making his word a lant-horne to our feete, in all our waies taking heede vnto it, as vnto *a moſt ſure word*, and a light *ſhining in darkneſſe*, therewithall joyning to the Lordes prayer, *Open my eyes, that I may ſee the wonders of thy lawe.*

The light of his word.

Pſal.

Pet.

Secondly, wee muſt remember, that wee cannot ſee God without ſome ſimilitude, & conformity with him. Therefore ſaith Chriſt, *Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit, for they ſhal ſee god.* Among all the members of the body, none can ſee the Sunne, but the eye, becauſe of ſome ſimilitude that is betweene them. For as God

A ſimilitude, and conformity with God.

hath ſet ἐν μεγαλόκοσμῳ in the great world, the Sunne and the Moone in the firmament, as inſtrumentes of light to ſerue it: ſo hath he placed ἐν μικρόκοσμῳ in the little worlde, (which is Man) two eies in the higheſt part of his body, as organes of light to ſerue him. But the eye being any way troubled, or offended, as we ſee by experience, abhors the light, wherein it otherwiſe delights: and after the ſame manner, the mind of man polluted with ſinne, neither can, nor dare looke vp to the Lord.

Aug. ſer. 18 *Oculus cordis perturbatus, auertit ſe à luce iuſtitiæ, nec audet eam contemplari.* The eye of the hart being perturbed (ſaith *Auguſtine*) turneth it ſelfe away from the light of righteouſnes, and dares not behold it. And to the ſame effect he ſais in another place,

Aug. ſer. 10 *Male viuendo videri à Deo potes, videre Deum non potes, bene autem viuendo & videris, & vides.* If thou liue an euill life,

life, thou ſhalt be ſeene of God, but ſhalt not ſee him: but if thou liue a good life, not only art thou ſeene of him, but thou maiſt alſo ſee him. So neceſſary is this conformity with God by ſanctification, that without it we cannot ſee God.

3 Attention, and conſideration.

Thirdly, to the ſight of God, there is requiſite attention and conſideration, a meeke, and quiet ſpirit. A hart ſtabliſhed by grace, ſeperate from other thinges, and intended on the Lord, *Oculus circumactus non videt etiam, quæ ante ſe ſunt*: A watering and reeling eye, ſees not theſe things which are before it; and an vnſtable mind, toſſed too and fro with reſtles cares, and perturbations, is not meete to ſee the Lord. When the Lord appeared to *Elijah* there went before him, a mighty wind, an earth-quake and fire: but God was not in one of them; he followed in a ſoft, and ſtill voice, to teach vs, that we muſt haue

meeke, ſetled, and pacified ſpirites, if we looke that God ſhould be familiar with vs: and we muſt ſet the eyes of our ſoules ſtable, and fixt on the Lord; attending on his ſhining mercies, like the eies of ſeruants on their maſters, ay, & while the Lord hath mercy vpon vs. Theſe are the principall helpes, whereby the ſight of God is begunne in earth, which will be perfected in heauen.

Verſe 31. *And the Sunne aroſe to him.*

The other thing wher in Iacob ſhewes his thankfulnes, is his obediẽce.

THe other thing wherein *Iacob* vttereth his thankfulneſſe, is in the obedience he giues to the Lords calling, walking on in the journey, which God commanded him. Without this, the other had bin nothing: for except we obey, and ſerue the Lorde in our callinges, doing that which is commanded vs; wherein can

can we be thankfull to him? & trulie there is no better tokē, that we haue beene refreſhed by the countenance of God, who is the ſtrength of his people, than this, if with boldnes, & ſpirituall courage, we followe him, where away he calles vs, albeit wee ſhould finde neuer ſo many impediments before vs.

But it is to be marked, that *Moſes* ſaith he halted as he went on in his journey. This is the meruaylous working of the Lord no doubt, that *Iacob* being hurt in the night, and his thigh bone disjoynted; yet walkes vpon the morne, and the hurt, which he receiued of the Lord, hinders him not, nor ſtaies him from going forward in the journey, which was enjoyned him by the Lord. We haue ſhewed you before, how the children of God in their wreſtlings doe in ſuch ſort preuaile, that they gette no victory without a wound; who is

Iacob his wounde makes him not giue ouer the iourney.

able to ſay, that he hath in ſuch ſort fought againſt Satan, and ſinne, but oftentimes he hath bin buffeted by Satan, and wounded by ſinne. Yet ſuch is the gratious diſpenſation of the Lord, that as *Iacobs* hurt made him not giue ouer the journey, but rather confirmes him to goe forward with greater boldnes, now halting on one thigh, then before when hee went ſtrait vpon both: ſo the Lord doth ſo diſpence the ſpirituall battailes of his children, that out of their manifold falles, and buffets, and woundes, which they receiue in this warfare, he workes in them a greater hatred of ſinne, and loue of righteouſneſſe; a greater attention, & circumſpection in all their waies, and a greater feruencie, and zeale to runne out the race, which is ſet before them, and to renue the battaile againſt Satan and ſinne.

And the woundes which the godly receiue in the ſpirituall combat make thē ſtronger, and more circumſpect.

And this we may ſee clearely in *Dauid*,

Dauid, who after his adultery and murder, being renued by repentance, riſeth againe with a greater hatred of ſinne, and more earneſt deſire of mercy, then euer hee had before. And did not *Peters* fall bring forth in like manner the like fruites in him, that he ſheddeth teares now more abundantly, then at any time before? He now ſtandes boldly to confeſſe the Lord Ieſus before the Councell, whome before he had denied before a damſell; and in all the reſt of his life, he ſhewes himſelfe an example of godly zeale, labouring to confirme his brethren by a good conuerſation, whome before he had offended by his ſtumbling, and falling. Thus the Lord, by ſome one ſinne, wherein he ſuffereth his children to haue experience of their weaknes, wakeneth them to a narrower inquiſition of their ſinnes; for a light paine in the head, men runne not

Example hereof in Dauid, & Peter.

not ay to the Physitian, nor to the water for a light spotte in their garments: but if the defiling be great, then doe we take occasion thereat, to wash away euen the smallest spot that is in them. So the godly, when oftentimes they passe ouer smal sins, without remorse, the Lord permittes them to fall into greater, that so they may be moued to mourning, and hasten to an earnest reformation of all.

This commeth not of anie goodnesse in vs, but of the lord his meruailous dispẽsation. *Aug. ad Bonifac. lib. 3. cap. 7.*

Where we are not to thinke, that this commeth of any goodnesse that is in vs, or in sinne which we haue brought forth, but of the excellent wisedome and goodnesse of God: *Deus etiam summus est medicus, qui benè nouit vti enim malis:* For God is that great Physitian, who can vse to good, euen those things which are euill. And it dooth (saieth the same father) more aduaunce the glorie of Gods goodnesse; *Etiam de malis bene facere*

Aug. de cor

ſaeere, quam mala eſſe non ſinere : Euen to drawe good out of euill, rather than that hee ſhould ſuffer euill not to be. Thus the Lord our God maketh all things ſerue and worke for the beſt to them that loue him: ſo as euen the wounds which wee receiue in ſpirituall Wreſtlings, may well worke in vs a greater humiliation, but ſhall not confound vs, ſo that wee leaue off the race and courſe to our heauenly Canaan. Wherein if we can not alway run in the ſtrength of the Spirite with *Elijah*; yet let vs by Gods grace endeuour to halt forward with *Iacob*, at the leaſt, creepe forward towardes our heauenly Father, as his little babes and children, who are but yet learning to walke: proceeding alway from ſtrength to ſtrength, till wee appeare before the face of our God in *Sion* : whereunto the Lord that is *the Authour and Finiſher of our faith*, the beginner and per-

rep. & grat. cap. 10

perfiter of our ſaluation may bring vs of his great mercie in Chriſt Ieſus. To whome with the Father, and the Holy Spirite be all praiſe, and honour, and glorie for euer, and euer,

Amen.